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MOVE OVER, KIDDOS

Crystal Salamon loves to colour. She figured other adults do, too. It inspired the Calgary artist's design of her own adult colouring books. Read her story in metroNEWS. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

NDP slow to set up shop

ORANGE CRUSH

While offices remain empty, government still collects lease money

Helen Pike and Braeden Jones
Metro | Calgary

Of the 50 NDP MLAs newly elected in Alberta's "Orange Crush," an investigation by Metro has revealed 34 of their constituency offices took nearly two months to open after the May 5 election.

By contrast, the Wildrose opposition had all offices set up before the end of May.

Metro contacted all NDP constituency offices and found many newly-elected NDP MLAs were still setting up shop. The investigation discovered the majority of the offices, 24 in total, opened in the first or second week of July and that 14 offices are still either not fully staffed or not prepared to take calls from constituents.

The investigation also revealed that the NDP government is nevertheless being paid by the Alberta Legislature for offices that are not functioning.

Jim Gurnett, the executive director of the NDP government caucus, said many of the new government's constituency office hires were unable to start right away and added that rural constituencies have had troubles filling positions. He said applications came from inside and outside the province.

"The staffing has taken from late May until now, basically," Gurnett said. "It's completely varied."

In an email, Gurnett also said MLAs without functioning constituency offices are still trying to respond to questions via email and are listening to voicemail.

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 17

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metro NEWS
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Stranded orca rescued in northern B.C. Canada

Colton Crowshoe's family still seeks answers in death

CRIME

Relatives hope vigil will stir memories, help solve murder

Robson Fletcher
Metro | Calgary

One year ago, Colton Crowshoe was found dead in a northeast Calgary retention pond after having been missing for weeks, with little action from police and little attention from the media.

On Saturday, his family and friends will gather to remember him, to heal and to urge anyone with information about his death to finally come forward.

The 18-year-old is believed to be the city's 20th homicide victim of 2014, but police haven't said if they have a person of interest in the case or even released information about how he died.

Crowshoe was last seen alive early July 4, 2014, after leaving a party in Calgary's Abbeydale community. His relatives went to police after his disappearance, but say they were repeatedly rebuffed.

In a statement last year, the family said police "dismissed our pleas and downplayed our version of events" and quickly "ruled out foul play," suggesting the young man "may not want to be found."

Colton Crowshoe's father Jimmy, carrying flowers, arrives at a memorial vigil for his son in July 2014 while police look on. Colton, inset, was last seen alive on July 4, 2014. His body was found July 24, 2014. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO; INSET: FACEBOOK

After his body was discovered on July 24, 2014, it was revealed Crowshoe had interacted with police prior to his disappearance.

Documents indicate he was arrested on break-in and loitering charges on July 2. Crowshoe's father Jimmy told Metro his son came away from the incident with bruises and scratches on his face that he alleged came at the hands of aggressive arresting officers.

"He kept telling them, the cops, that he wanted their badge numbers," Jimmy said last July. "When he came home, he was crying."

Family members believed the scuffle with the officers influenced the willingness of police to undertake an investigation into his disappearance days later, and the fact that Crowshoe was aboriginal didn't help matters, either.

"Ultimately the system failed us and it fails First Nations youth," said Danielle Crowshoe, Colton's aunt, at a memorial vigil for her nephew last year.

One year later, Danielle said the family remains "frustrated" by the lack of progress in both the murder investigation and a subsequent investigation into the conduct of Calgary police by the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT).

However, she said police have also made successful efforts in regaining the trust of the family.

"The detectives that we're interacting with, the ones that are heading up the homicide investigation, they've actually done quite well in building our trust," Danielle said, adding that other, "everyday officers" have also approached them to "more or less apologize" for how things were handled last year.

Danielle said the family now hopes that people in the aboriginal community who may have been reluctant to speak with investigators last year will be more willing to come forward. She said a goal of the vigil is to encourage anyone who knows something about Crowshoe's death to contact Crime Stoppers anonymously.

"Last year, people had information but they were too afraid to tell the police, either in fear of retribution from whoever did it or retribution from the police, themselves," she said. "It really made the investigation hard."

Danielle said what is most difficult now is the fact that Crowshoe's killer or killers remain at large.

The Calgary Police Service declined to be interviewed for this story, saying it couldn't comment due to the ongoing ASIRT investigation.

The Justice For Colton Candlelight Vigil is set for Saturday at 5 p.m. at the Abbeydale Community Centre. More information can be found at facebook.com/BringColtonCrowshoeHome.

SEARCH

Missing man found in cabin

The wife of a Cochrane man reported missing earlier this week said she's glad he was found by local RCMP Thursday.

Paul Kerr, 59, was found alive early Thursday in a cabin near Towers Trail south of Cochrane after he was reported missing on Tuesday.

Kerr's wife, who didn't want to be identified, said she felt overwhelmed when she heard he had gone missing.

"We were terrified," she said. "He spent two nights in the cold."

Cochrane RCMP Sgt. Jeff Campbell said Kerr was found disoriented and dehydrated, adding he had been in the cabin alone for one day.

EMS arrived at the scene and drove him to a nearby hospital.

"(Kerr) was extremely dehydrated and very confused," he said. "We found him sleeping in the cabin at a reduced level of consciousness."

Campbell said the RCMP are assuming medical conditions may have been the reason for Kerr's disappearance.

He said the RCMP do not suspect foul play, adding Kerr likely wandered off.

RCMP will continue to investigate the details of the situation through interviews with the family.

"Hopefully (Kerr) recalls what happened," Campbell said.

Kerr's wife said she's happy her husband was found safe and will soon be home.

"The (rescue team) was absolutely phenomenal and the Cochrane RCMP were amazing," she said. JEREMY SIMES/FOR METRO

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A fire ripped through this Coventry Hills home on Thursday. JENNIFER FRIESEN/METRO

Family flees blaze, neighbours rally

HOUSE FIRE

Community rallies to help after fire in Coventry Hills

Jennifer Friesen
For Metro

When Amanda Garcia went to bed on Wednesday night, she had no idea she'd be spending her daughter's seventh birthday talking to insurance companies and finding shoes for her children.

At approximately 3:15 a.m. on Thursday, she woke to her fire alarm blaring and found her 11-year-old son's bedroom engulfed in flames.

He luckily wasn't in his room, and Garcia quickly rounded up her five children and ran out of their Coventry Hills home.

"It was a matter of minutes," she said. "It all happened so fast, we were literally running out of the house as the windows were breaking."

The Calgary Fire Department arrived on the scene shortly after to put out the blaze, but the damage to the house is extensive.

Garcia said she was told that the floor collapsed in two of the bedrooms upstairs and the fire tore through parts of the roof.

But within three hours, the community was already dropping off donations for that family.

Neighbour Billy-Jo McBride ran to the scene after smelling the smoke and quickly began gathering names, ages and clothing sizes for all the kids to get them some clothing and shoes.

"It was just complete devastation," said McBride.

"They lost everything. I know insurance is there, but everything takes time so we want to help with the immediate needs."

> **"They lost everything. I know insurance is there... but we want to help with immediate needs**
> Billy-Jo McBride, neighbour

McBride joined another neighbour, Tamara Keller, to rally the community together. They sent emails to the neighbours, made a Facebook page listing their needs and launched a GoFundMe campaign in a matter of hours.

"I'm so thankful, I can't believe my neighbours are doing this for me," said Garcia.

"I think I'm still in shock. I keep remembering that we're starting from zero, but I'm just so grateful that everyone's OK, and there were no injuries. We were lucky."

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

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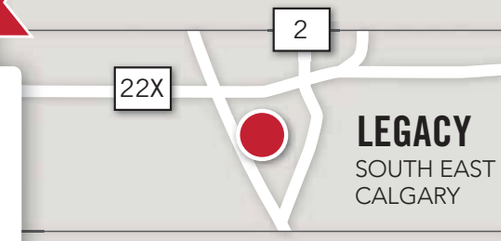

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IN BRIEF

Company given orders for toxic fertilizer cleanup

A numbered Alberta company has received its marching orders for cleaning up a large fertilizer spill in one of the province's rivers.

Last week, a storage tank owned by 1370996 Alberta Ltd. spilled almost 10,000 litres of ammonium nitrate, much of which ended up in the Little Bow River.

Ammonium nitrate is toxic to fish.

Alberta Environment has issued an environmental protection order to the company. All its cleanup plans and monitoring data must be submitted to the government for approval.

The order comes after the government's local compliance manager decided the company wasn't doing enough to clean up the mess in the river.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

No fault found in police shooting outside station

A Mountie has been cleared of any wrongdoing in a shooting outside the Redcliff RCMP detachment.

Alberta government investigators say a man went to the detachment outside of Medicine Hat last October around 3 a.m. and used an outside phone to call police, claiming he was being followed.

An RCMP officer went to the door but noticed the man had a pistol.

The Mountie shot the man after he refused to drop the weapon and pointed it at the officer.

Paramedics took the man, who was not identified, to hospital for emergency surgery. He survived.

Investigators say the pistol the man pointed at the Mountie was a replica Smith and Wesson BB gun.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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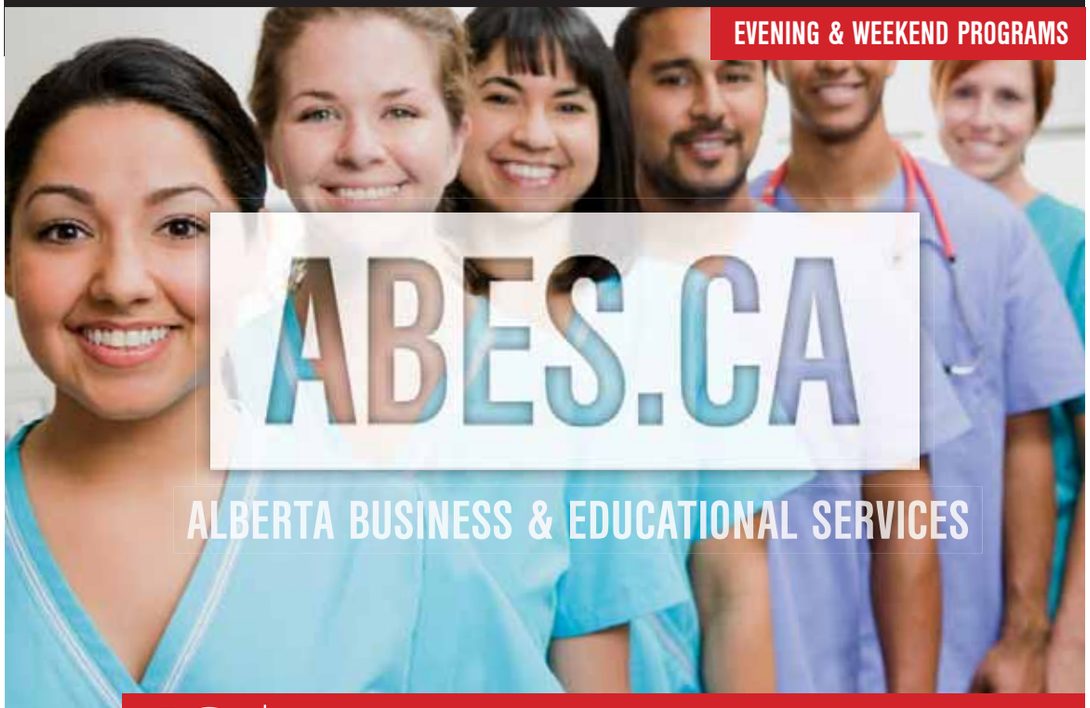

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Sue Schauermann, left, and Belinda Morrison leave the Guess store after Morrison surprised Schauermann with a gift from the retailer. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Guess also says 'yes' to redress

BEBE BROUHAHA

Woman blesses stressed friend with new dress from the mess

Lucie Edwardson and Jennifer Friesen
For Metro | Calgary

Belinda Morrison is calling it "the silver lining to an unfortunate situation."

After an incident at the Bebe store in Chinook Centre left Morrison minus $168 and her birthday purchase, an employee at another retail store saw the story and wanted to do something nice for Morrison.

Danielle Guillet, a sales associate at the Guess store in Southcentre, talked to her manager, who "thought it was a great idea." So she reached out to Morrison and offered her a birthday dress from Guess.

Morrison said she couldn't have been more touched by the offer but added that she "didn't feel right accepting any gifts" after Bebe sent her the dress, apologized and reimbursed her.

Instead, Morrison asked if she could give her gift to someone she felt was more deserving — and Guess agreed.

Morrison describes her friend Sue Schauermann as "the most selfless person, hard-working and always putting her time into her kids."

The single mother of two is attending school to be a medical office assistant and drives a bus part-time.

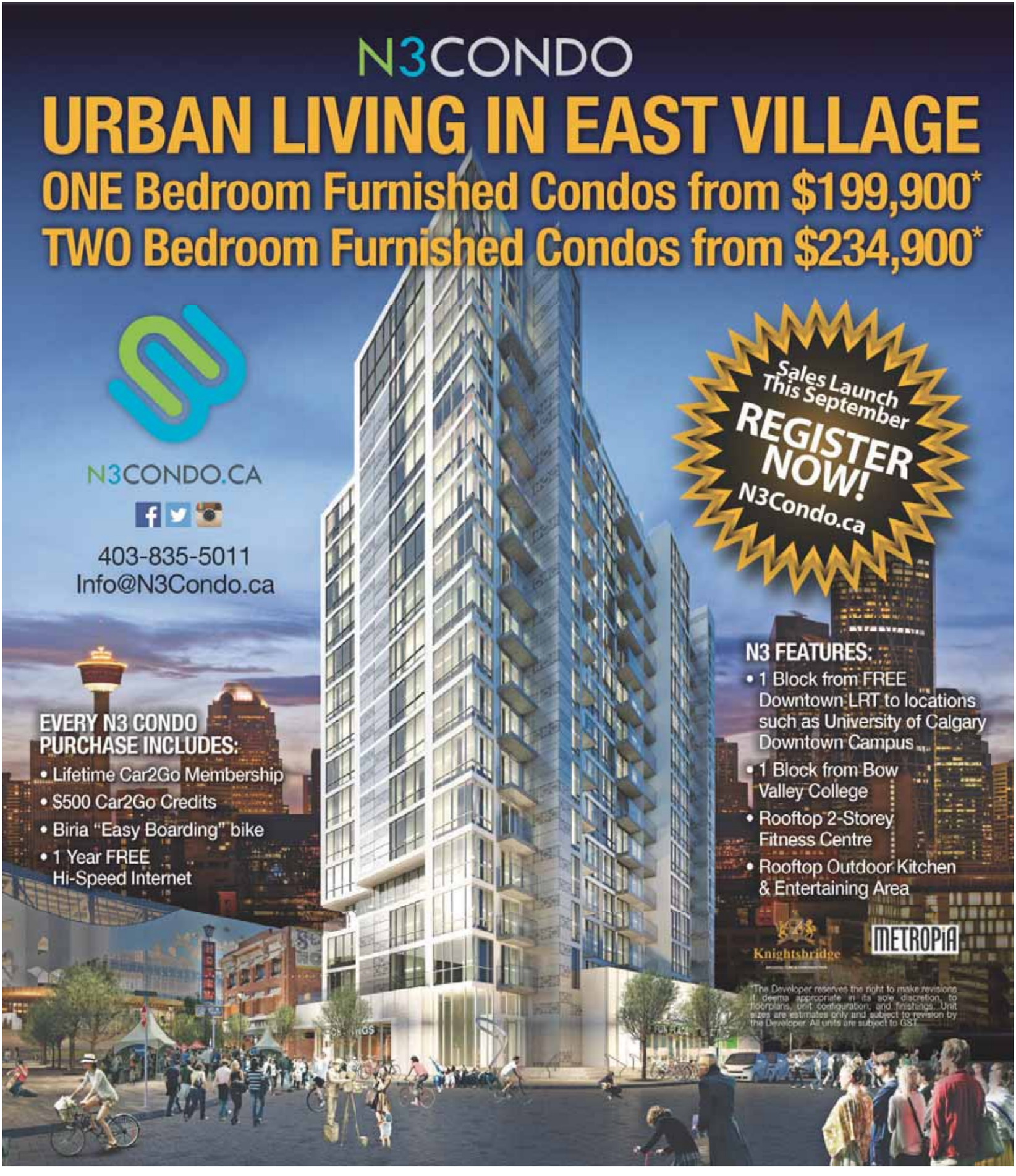
"She was the first person that popped into my head," said Morrison.

On Thursday afternoon, Morrison surprised her with the news as she took her inside the Guess store to shop around. Schauermann became emotional as she left with her new long-sleeve reptile jacket.

"It's been a struggle since January," said Schauermann, as her eyes filled with tears.

"Just raising my kids on my own and being tied down to my homework, I don't have a lot of time to myself. This is just so nice. For Belinda to think of me is amazing."

> **Just raising my kids on my own and being tied down to my homework, I don't have a lot of time to myself. This is just so nice.**
> Sue Schauermann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METROTALKS JUWAN SIMPSON

EACH WEEK WE'RE TAKING YOU BEHIND THE SCENES WITH PLAYERS, FANS, COACHES AND OTHERS WORKING WITH THE CALGARY STAMPEDERS TO FIND OUT WHAT MAKES THEM TICK.

SIMPSON ON FAMILY & RELAXATION

CANDICE WARD FOR METRO

Calgary Stampeders' Juwan Simpson — fearless on the field and father off the field. In his eighth season in the CFL — all of which have been with the Stampeders, the middle linebacker from Decatur, Alabama talks with Metro about spending time away from his family to continue his career on the field.

Away from Home

Like a number of the Stampeders, Simpson is a loving husband and father. But unlike other players, his family remains back home in Alabama while he tackles his dream of being a professional football player. Simpson said it's possible because of the support her receives from his wife, Alena.

"Without her being the strong woman that she is, working and raising two little ones, it would be much harder to do this year in, year out," said Simpson.

"I'm thankful for her, and her allowing me to continue my dream."

Over the off-season, Simpson and his wife welcomed their second child, AJ, who is now seven months old. Along with daughter Laila, 2, his wife and children do manage to make it up a few times during the season, but Simpson said being away from his new family is a bit difficult at times.

"It's very tough, but I realize it's part of the job," said Simpson.

"It definitely makes you understand the word 'sacrifice.'"

Off the Field

Simpson, a two-time Grey Cup champion, recorded his first interception of the season during last week's home game against the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. But when he's not padding his stats on the field, he can be found at home relaxing.

"If I had a 9-to-5 office job, I would probably have hobbies. But playing football is so active and time demanding, and so physically and mentally demanding, when I do have free time, I like to take that time to just relax," said Simpson.

For him, that includes watching movies and the occasional video game.

"I like to play Call of Duty — but not play online. Some of these little kids around here are too good for me. I'm too competitive and I get angry because they kill me all the time," he said.

The Calgary Stampeders are in Ottawa this weekend to take on the Redblacks in the nation's capital.

Biggest Fan

Over the years, Simpson has become a fan favourite, but it's his mom who will always be his No. 1 fan.

"My mom has been really supportive since Day 1," said Simpson.

"She told me to chase my dreams, if being away for six months is part of it, she's cheering me on."

Although he lost his father when he was just 20 years old, Simpson said his father had a huge impact on the man he's become on and off the field.

"A lot of times it's not until you get older that you really understand what your parents were saying," said Simpson.

"When he passed away, I felt like for whatever reason, I really felt like it was time to really take that step as an adult, as a man, because I didn't have a man in my life per se."

Pre-Game Rituals

For Simpson, getting in a big breakfast is the best way to head into game day.

"The ideal big breakfast would include eggs, hash-browns, waffles, bacon or sausage and you got to have some biscuits," said Simpson.

Once he hits the stadium on game day, as one of the team captains, Simpson also makes sure his team is mentally ready to hit the field and pull of another victory.

"Sometimes I talk to the team before the game to try and get them amped up — but that varies," said Simpson.

"That's the only ritual; break the team down before the game. Otherwise, it's just a matter of feel."

QUICK Q&A

1. Favourite sport to watch other than football?
Basketball.

2. What do you love to talk about but no one ever asks you about?
The human mind. I like people, observing, reading people.

3. Your all-time favourite Stampeder (past or present):
Herm Harrison.

4. Favourite Calgary hangout:
My apartment.

5. What is your ideal vacation?
Somewhere at the beach. Somewhere quiet and peaceful.

6. If we turned on your iPod, what would be playing?
Meek Mill.

7. What movie could you watch over and over again?
Any of 'The Friday' (movies, with Ice Cube).

8. Bucket-list item you are dying to cross off?
Travel, specifically Amsterdam and Paris.

9. Early bird or night owl?
Early bird

10. Beer or wine?
Beer, but liquor's quicker.

11. If you never became a football player, what would you have become?
Whatever I wanted to do. I am very strong-willed person and whatever it was I decided to do, I would be successful at it.

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Device helps count calories on the go

TECHNOLOGY

Bluetooth scale picks up on your eating habits

Aaron Chatha
For Metro | Calgary

When trying to live healthy, it's easy to count the pull-ups, push-ups and sit-ups, but sometimes we forget to count the calories.

One Calgary developer is aiming to make healthy eating easier with a portable Bluetooth nutrition scale called Slate Scale. It connects to an iOS or Android app on your phone to deliver calorie and nutrition information based on your serving size and meal selected. It also picks up on your eating habits.

"For breakfast, most people typically eat the same thing," said Rana Varma, co-founder of Slate Scale. "It will recognize that and instead of keying it in every time, it would just prompt you with your common breakfast items."

The scale is small enough to fit in a purse or jacket. You can place food directly on the stainless steel surface, or put it on a plate and the scale will adjust accordingly.

The app offers recipe suggestions if you're a little short of your daily calorie intake and shares data with popular fitness apps, like Fitbit and MyFitnessPal.

Currently, Slate Scale exists only as a working prototype with the developers, but Varma hopes to begin a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign in August. For more information, visit www.slatescale.com.

Calgary developers aim to make healthy living easier with a portable Bluetooth scale. COURTESY RANA VARMA

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50622 5DR RS turbo & leather $26,635 20.38% $21,207
50624 5D SOLD! ath SOLD! $26, SOLD! $21,051
SPARK
50801 5DR 2LT heated seats & touch screen $22,295 20.09% $17,816
TERRAIN
56388 SLT 2.4L leather $38,645 20.16% $30,856
56360 SL SOLD! nd p SOLD! $42, SOLD! $34,123
56370 DENALI 3.6L sun & sound pkg $46,925 20.36% $37,369
TRAVERSE
54406 LT SOLD! pk SOLD! $44 SOLD! $35,010
VERANO
59252 2.4L auto & a/c $26,465 20.03% $21,165
59261 2.4L auto & a/c $26,605 20.03% $21,277
SILVERADO WAS SAVE NOW
55178 CR SOLD! athe SOLD! $63, SOLD! $47,433
55184 CR SOLD! nor SOLD! $52, SOLD! $40,540
55207 CREW CAB LTZ sunroof & 22" rims $68,010 25.00% $51,010
55150 DBL CAB 2LT heated seats & remote start $52,295 22.85% $40,346
CRUZE
52302 2LT AUTO RS pkg $28,950 21.66% $22,679
52320 2LS AUTO Onstar & A/C $22,715 20.06% $18,159
52337 2LS AUTO Onstar & A/C $22,520 20.05% $18,005
52361 2LS AUTO Onstar & A/C $22,520 20.05% $18,005
52381 DI SOLD! and SOLD! $30, SOLD! $23,781
52382 DIESEL sun and sound pkg $29,915 21.09% $23,605
52371 DIESEL sun and sound pkg $29,720 20.95% $23,495
52384 DIESEL sun and sound pkg $29,720 20.95% $23,495
ENCLAVE
59320 PR SOLD! & n SOLD! $59, SOLD! $45,772
59324 LE SOLD! at t SOLD! $57, SOLD! $44,679
EQUINOX
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PROJECTS

$880M earmarked for infrastructure

The money has begun to flow to Alberta's municipalities for infrastructure projects.

Municipal Affairs Minister Deron Bilous said Thursday that $880 million will be dispatched this year to communities under the Municipal Sustainability Initiative.

That's $25 million more than had been proposed in the budget put forward by the Progressive Conservatives in the spring.

Bilous said the new NDP government remains committed to providing sustainable, stable funding to communities.

"If oil drops or stays low, it definitely impacts provincial revenues, but municipalities still have the same number of people that they need to provide services for," he said.

Municipal funding is to be addressed in the 2015-16 budget, which the NDP has said will be introduced in October.

The Tory budget was waiting to be passed when the Progressive Conservatives were defeated in the May 5 election.

Nolan Crouse, mayor of St. Albert and chairman of the Capital Region Board, said the money sends a positive message.

"What's been important is that the minister has been really clear that the government supports municipalities," he said.

Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson said the extra $25 million spread across the province is small, but important, because it keeps pace with inflation.

"Part of sustainable and predictable funding is not just announcing money and following through on it. It's also making sure that that funding keeps pace with the cost of doing business in Alberta."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Deron Bilous, NDP Municipal Affairs Minister
THE CANADIAN PRESS

CRIME

Scammer dressing up as Enmax staffer

Calgary police and Enmax are warning Calgarians of a door-to-door fraud involving people posing as Enmax employees.

On Friday, police were called to the 400 block of 71 Avenue SE by a woman who said a man — dressed in what appeared to be an Enmax uniform, while carrying a clipboard and toolbox — knocked on her door.

The man told the woman she had a late bill. If she did not pay $837.56 upfront in cash, he was going to disconnect her electricity. Concerned with a child in the home who requires electricity for medical needs, the woman said she had $600 cash and said she would pay the rest by cheque.

The man refused the cheque, took the cash and said he would be back for the remaining balance. No receipt was issued to the woman.

After calling Enmax to pay the remainder, the woman learned her account was clear.

METRO

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Getting a licence? Give a liver

HEALTH

Registry signs up about 2,500 organ donors every week

IN DEFENCE OF

Mike Morrison
Metro | Calgary

Last week, I made one of the most important decisions of my life, and it had to do with what happens immediately after I die.

It was a regular day when I popped into AMA to change the address on my licence, but within in a matter of minutes, I was also signing up to donate my body to science.

It seemed strange to me that the person who helps me book a vacation and buy movie tickets was also the person that signed me up to eventually have my body cut open, but it worked.

And it seems to be working for a lot of people. Thanks to the province's relatively new donor registry program, Albertans have been signing up as organ donors at a rate of about 2,500 per week. That's a lot of eyeballs.

The surge in body parts is due to the fact that Alberta registries are now required to ask people if they want to be an organ donor when they come in to renew their licence. So basically I now have a new licence and someone someday might have a new liver.

It's a really great program; although I do think if you sign up for it, the province should cover your remaining parking tickets. I mean, I just gave you my body and all of its contents — you can't pay off my $100 speeding ticket?

Of course, there are lots of reasons people don't want to donate, I'm thinking mainly for religious reasons. So I'm by no means saying you should do something that might go against something as important to you as your own religion. But if you don't have a really valid reason for holding on to your body, why not let it go? It's sort of like throwing out a perfectly good pizza before asking if anyone else wants to eat it. Sure it doesn't really matter that the pizza is in the garbage, but someone may have really needed that extra slice.

Since signing my organs away last week, my brain has been full of thoughts about what the rest of my life might look like.

I now know that someday the very body that's typing this column will either save a life or help advance medical research. That's a pretty cool feeling.

But with that feeling, truthfully comes a bit of disappointment.

As a gay man, while my organs can still be donated, according to Alberta Health Services, my tissues cannot.

So even though my eyes, skin, heart valves, bones and tendons are just as good as a straight person's or even a lesbian's, they'll go to waste.

When you renew your licence, you'll be asked to be an organ donor. JOHN ROWLEY/MOOD BOARD/ REX FEATURES

AHS explains their stance by saying that while they understand the frustration of some Albertans, the program's "organ and tissue donation policies are in keeping with national standards and international standards and best practices."

Which is definitely still true, no matter how crappy it makes me feel.

And the good news is that I don't plan on actually donating any of my organs and tissues anytime soon.

So my hope is that by the time medical professionals do crack into my body, scientific research and society will allow me to do what I originally signed up to do last week and that's simply to help another human being.

Mike Morrison tweets from @mikesbloggity.

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The Milk Tiger Lounge has been ranked one of the top bars in the world by Conde Nast Traveller magazine. FACEBOOK

SLUGLINE

Calgary bar named among world's best

This cat doesn't need to change its stripes after being named to a list of top bars in the world.

The Milk Tiger Lounge, located on 14 Avenue and 4 Street SW, is among 30 top-tier bars listed by Condé Nast Traveller.

The magazine asked mixologists, bartenders and cocktail connoisseurs to submit their choices.

Colin Tait, head bartender at Vesper in Bangkok, chose Milk Tiger.

"I know what you're thinking—'Calgary, cocktails, eh?'—but this is a bar you can definitely call a home away from home," Tait told the publication."Their level of expertise and dedication to the craft is excellent."

But it's more than cocktails that make the bar great, he said.

"The guys [who] work the stick are some of the friendliest in the business, what I would call true hosts," he told Conde Nast Traveller.

"Everyone can have a great time here; it's second to none."

Posted on Facebook, the Milk Tiger Lounge said it's an honour to be placed among the world's most fab bars.

"A big thank you to our friend Colin Tait at Vesper in Bangkok," they wrote.

METRO

IN BRIEF

Public warned to keep windows locked after two charged in robberies

Two individuals have been charged by Calgary Police in relation to a number of break-and-enters and car prowlings in the city.

Clayton Ronal Holmes, 26, and Savanna Douglass, 33, have been taken into custody.

On Wednesday morning, officers spotted a stolen vehicle in the southeast Calgary community of Chaparral Valley.

They observed the vehicle heading south on the QE2, out of city limits. Working with the RCMP and Alberta Sheriffs, a traffic stop was set up where the two suspects were taken into custody.

Investigators were able to connect the suspects to seven previously reported events, leading to 18 charges being laid.

Charges included possession of stolen property over $5,000, a stolen credit card and identity theft.

Police remind all Calgarians to lock vehicle and residence doors, windows and entrances.

METRO

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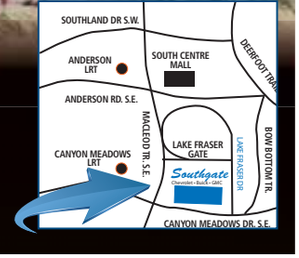

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FOLK FEST PROFILE

Music, bikes draw Sandy Desta to volunteering

The 2015 Calgary Folk Music Festival runs from Thursday to Sunday at Prince's Island Park. More than 1,700 volunteers help run the festival, and Metro will profile one volunteer each day during the festival. First up, Sandy Desta.

Metro: What is your job during the Calgary Folk Fest?
Sandy Desta: I'm a bicycle lock-up volunteer. I've been volunteering with this crew for two years. We basically tag the bikes and look after them. It's free, which I think is a good incentive for people to ride their bikes instead of driving and paying for parking.

Metro: Why do you like volunteering for Folk Fest?
SD: I like meeting new people and hearing new bands. I feel like there are so many bands that you've never heard of before. And I just like volunteering with other like-minded people and helping out the city.

Sandy Desta
LISA WILTON/FOR METRO

Metro: Why do you think people should bike to the festival?
SD: I think it's more convenient. Parking is hard to find downtown and cycling is better for the environment.

It's really interesting to see how fancy some of the bikes get.

And we have a tire pump station if people have a flat tire. They'll help out if your bike breaks down.

LISA WILTON/FOR METRO

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London singer and musicologist, Sam Lee, reinterprets the old songs of Gypsies and Travellers. He performs at the Calgary Folk Fest on Saturday and Sunday. FREDERIC ARANDA/COURTESY

Lee follows folk passion to Calgary

MUSIC

U.K. singer Sam Lee takes his life's work to the stage

Lisa Wilton
For Metro | Calgary

Scouring the English and Irish countryside for traditional folk songs has become a life's work for Sam Lee.

The London-based singer, who performs Saturday and Sunday at the Calgary Folk Music Festival, has garnered recognition and much acclaim for his first three albums — 2012's Ground Of Its Own, 2014's More For to Rise and his latest release, The Fade in Time, which include songs from the British Isles that date back centuries.

"I started researching songs I had heard recorded by commercial artists," said the 35-year-old vocalist, whose interpretations of traditional Roma Gypsy and English, Scottish and Irish Travellers songs have been called wildly creative and groundbreaking by the British press.

"I wanted to know where (the songs) had come from."

A longtime 'campfire singer,' Lee was drawn to the songs and stories of Scottish Gypsies and Travellers after meeting late Aberdeen folk balladeer and storyteller Stanley Robertson at an English folk music festival.

"I walked into a vocal session and I saw him there and recognized his voice from songs I'd listened to," Lee recalled.

"He was my mentor and he really taught me how to sing in that (U.K.) northeast, Aberdeen style … It was meeting him that I realized there were still Travellers out there singing and I wanted to find those singers and songs that had not been recorded."

While Lee has tracked down dozens of unrecorded or wholly obscure songs during the past decade, he admits it's getting harder to uncover these musical artifacts.

"The encounters now are getting thinner," he admits. "As I cover more and more of Ireland I'm realizing you can count on a couple of people's hands the number of these singers left."

Lee, who once worked as a wilderness survival expert, was nominated for a Mercury Songwriting Prize for his debut and currently hosts a popular radio show on the non-commercial station, Resonance FM in London (resonancefm.com.)

"I run the Nest Collective Hour, which is also the name of the weekly folk club I run," he says.

"It's great. I get to dig out some really weird and rare stuff."

SAM LEE LIVE

Sunday show time
Sam Lee plays Stage 5 at 4:40 p.m. on Sunday as well as various workshops during the weekend. Go to CalgaryFolkFest.com for more info.

During a study on Type 2 diabetes, former competitive cyclist Dustin Hittel linked a protein called actinin-3 to fitness. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Prof links gene to cardio fitness

HEALTH

Study shows 1 in 5 people carry actinin-3 mutation

Jennifer Friesen
For Metro

As a climber and former competitive cyclist, Dustin Hittel always considered himself to be pretty fit — but for some reason, he could never sprint.

"I mean, I really can't sprint," he said. "So I've always been interested in whether or not people are naturally gifted athletes or if it's a nature-nurture thing."

Now, the assistant professor and researcher at the University of Calgary has started to answer a few of his long-held questions.

After four years of researching a genetic link to Type 2 diabetes in healthy young adults, Hittel made a surprise discovery about a protein called actinin-3.

The protein was first linked to muscle power in 2003 and was nicknamed the "sports gene," but no one had linked it to physical fitness. Approximately one billion people carry a mutation of the gene, resulting in a complete lack of the protein in their muscle.

After collecting genetic data from the participants and admittedly "putting them through the ringer" through physical tests, he decided to see if actinin-3 factored into the figures.

His summer student returned with the results days later, showing a 15 per cent difference in cardiovascular fitness between those who had the genetic mutation and those who didn't.

"Initially, I didn't believe it, I thought it had to be a mistake," he said. "So I kept checking the data over and over, and it was right. It was enough to be the difference between a trained and an untrained person."

The study shows that one in five people carry the mutation and, on average, have higher body weight and reduced fitness, but he doesn't necessarily see it as a bad thing.

Hittel carries the mutation himself, answering his quandary about his inability to sprint. The presence of actinin-3 seems to "turn the dial back a bit," said Hittel, and he questions if it evolved as a way to adapt to northern climates and preserve energy.

"It's like the difference of being a diesel engine and a sports car," he said.

PARKS CANADA

Banff visitor fined $1K after video shows bear feeding

Parks Canada has released a video and images of a person feeding a black bear in Banff National Park, who was later charged and fined for the offence.

The video was released as a reminder to park users to avoid feeding wildlife in Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks due to obvious safety concerns. Parks officials said they've seen a rise in the feeding of wildlife in these areas.

"Seeing a bear in the wild is one of the most sought after experiences in our national parks," a Parks Canada statement reads.

They are asking park users who see people stopped on the roadways to feed wildlife, including on the Bow Valley and Icefield Parkways, to report these instance.

They'd like people to record a license plate number and, if safe to do so, take a photo of the vehicle or person involved.

The released video and images led to the offender pleading guilty and receiving a $1,000 fine. METRO

A Banff visitor was slapped with a $1,000 fine for this black bear encounter. COURTESY PARKS CANADA

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Crystal Salamon's new adult colouring book will be released in September.
JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Artist pens adult colouring book

ART

Woman says colouring is a powerful healing tool

Jennifer Friesen
For Metro

When pulling up a chair beside her two sons, Crystal Salamon would always pick up a crayon and start colouring along with them.

"It's just like I'm a kid, too," she laughed. "And then before you know it, they're off playing with other toys and I'm still stuck on this colouring book, and I've finished the entire book myself."

And she's not alone — colouring isn't just for kids anymore. Five of the top 20 bestsellers on Amazon.com are adult colouring books, and now, Alberta's joining in.

As a private art instructor in Turner Valley, Salamon first caught wind of adult colouring books this winter, "and something just clicked."

"I think there are a lot of people out there who don't consider themselves to be artists," she said.

"Maybe they're intimidated or don't know where to start. But this is a way for people to channel their inner creativity and be an artist in a way they normally wouldn't be."

Salamon began creating her own adult colouring book four months ago, and already has more than 700 people on the wait-list for the book.

Since she began, messages from all over the world have poured in from people who say they use colouring as a way to cope with stress, anxiety and chronic pain.

One man said that it's a therapeutic practice as he recovers from injuries sustained in the Boston Marathon bombing.

A disabled army veteran said it brought him a sense of comfort and community.

A mother said it's the only thing that helps her 16-year-old daughter as she battles depression, anxiety and ADHD.

> **"I think there are a lot of people out there who don't consider themselves to be artists.**
> Crystal Salamon

"Another person told me that, in a lot of ways, (colouring) has saved their life," said Salamon.

"From something as simple as colouring books? It just blows me away, it's amazing. Art is such a powerful thing, so to make it accessible to people who might be intimidated by it is pretty special."

Salamon's book will be published this September, and, on Sept. 26, she'll be speaking at the Okotoks Women's Conference about the healing potential of colouring.

An increase of the **Government of Canada's Universal Child Care Benefit** offers Canadian families:

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CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

This is still on the door of the Calgary-Acadia constituency. Jonathan Denis was ousted in the provincial election.
JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

'No excuse' for closed MLA offices

POLITICS

Portion of budget going to leases on empty spaces

Helen Pike and Braeden Jones
Metro | Calgary

Current and former MLAs are scratching their heads at why the reigning Alberta NDP government hasn't yet filled constituency offices, despite the fact they are hubs for community engagement.

Outgoing Edmonton-Central MLA Laurie Blakeman said after 18 years in her office, she and her staff cleared out before May 14.

Between May 14 and some time in the first week of July, the Edmonton-Centre office was empty and constituents had no one to contact — a predicament many in the province faced until this month.

Greg Clark, leader of the Alberta Party, said the central job of an MLA is to serve constituents, and an office is part of that.

"There's a lot of casework to do in every constituency, and we've all been given budget for staff right out of the gate, the leases for the existing constituency offices are still in place, and so really there's no excuse."

Scott Ellis, senior financial officer with the Legislative Assembly, said MLAs may choose to change their constituency office's lease, and added that many are still in the process of working through terminations and new spaces.

But the total cost of that process is mounting — so far costing Albertans approximately $77,000, for a service not all of them are getting.

Constituency budgets vary depending on the number of voters in a riding, number of constituents, and distance to the legislature. The base annual allowance for offices is $27,626 in rural areas and $33,151 in urban areas.

The budget is meant to cover 12 months of office leasing, but for most government MLAs a portion was either left unspent since the election, or went towards leasing an empty space.

"It's a pretty significant concern to us that the individual MLAs are still receiving the full portion of their constituency budget, yet they are unable to open their office," said Wildrose House Leader Nathan Cooper.

"The NDP has said they are going to spend the summer listening to Albertans as they prepare the budget, I think an office would certainly help the listening process."

POLITICS

Three MLAs had federal aspirations

The reverberations of the Alberta general election were felt even in Ottawa, where Federal NDP leader Tom Mulcair was congratulating his orange counterparts in Alberta.

Behind the scenes, the results affected the federal party's plans for the upcoming federal election this fall.

"There were three (New Democrats) who put their name forward provincially and won who had already put their name forward federally," said federal NDP spokesman George Soule.

> **"(They) were inspired by the message Rachel Notley brought**
> George Soule, federal NDP spokesman

The NDP has nomination meetings scheduled in Edmonton and across the country in the coming weeks.

Soule said although a few potential candidates were lost in the May election, the provincial win inspired more people to step up federally.

"(They) were inspired by the message Rachel Notley brought, and the message Tom Mulcair is bringing."

BRAEDEN JONES/METRO

Notley's success has reduced Tom Mulcair's candidate list in Alberta.
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

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Carl Holst, Sales Manager at **Stampede Toyota,** just announced plans to hold a Used Vehicle Spring Clear Out Sale with savings up to 50% off every Used Vehicle in stock **Taking Place Tomorrow! July, 25, 2015.**

According to Mr. Holst, increased sales from the last few months have resulted in an overstock of tradeins. "In the last three months our sales have increased at a higher than expected rate", Holst said. "Now, we have too many cars and trucks on our used lot and must reduce this to a more manageable number.

During this Used Vehicle Clear Out Sale every used car and truck will be sold with discounts from 10% up to 50% off the original asking price. Our customers will find these prices thousands of dollars lower than our competition and even lower than the auctions." Mr. Holst Said. Auction bidding often inflates the true value of a car so you pay more. Here every car and truck is on sale up to 50% off, first come first served and no bidding.

It's the perfect opportunity to get a good quality used car at the lowest price in the city. All cars are on display at **Stampede Toyota on Barlow Trail, 2 blocks north of the Trans Canada Highway.** This Sale is one day only, doors opening at 8:30 am. Those who arrive early will get the best selection.

Prices will be posted on the windshields and customers will be given the opportunity to purchase the vehicle at these amazingly reduced sale prices. This unheard of approach to selling used vehicles will make it easy and quick for anybody in the market for a good used vehicle to get a great car or truck at a very low price with no hassle or the need for endless haggling.

One of Calgary's largest import dealers is overstocked and is forced to sell used cars and trucks for as low as 50% OFF tomorrow, July 25, 2015, during a one-day sale event.

"Wholesale buyers will be represented to take trade-ins during the sale," Mr. Holst said. "We also have four business managers who will help buyers arrange affordable financing options."

We've got over $14 Million Dollars in inventory to choose from. Our total Inventory will be close to 600 new and used cars and trucks to choose from. We want to remind everyone again that this is a oneday sale only. When their inventory has been reduced, they will remove the sale prices and return to normal operations.

"Since we are a local business we would like to give back to the community we are in," Mr. Holst said. "We would rather allow local people to buy these overstocked vehicles than have to wholesale them at an auction."

All cars will be clearly marked with discounts from 10% up to 50% for the entire day. Be sure to get down there early for best selection and take advantage of this opportunity to get the vehicle you have been waiting for, at the price you have been waiting for.

Due to the volume of sales during this event, please no telephone inquiries.

AMVIC Licensee

A volunteer works to keep an orca alive after she became stranded on some rocks in Hartley Bay on B.C.'s northern coast Wednesday. COURTESY CETACEAN LAB

Beached whale gets helping hand

NORTHERN B.C.

Stranded orca saved after six hours of being stuck on rock

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

A transient killer whale has been rescued after she beached herself on some rocks in Hartley Bay on B.C.'s northern coast Wednesday morning.

The emotional story of the stranded orca's rescue was posted on Facebook on Wednesday, where it has since been making waves on social media.

"She cried often, which tore at our hearts, but as the tide came up there were many cheers as this whale was finally free after (six-plus) hours of being stuck on this rock," reads the Facebook post from the group Whale Point.

"It was a team effort, and fortunately on some level this transient orca understood that we were trying to help."

Hermann Meuter, director of whale research group Cetacean Lab, said volunteers spent seven hours trying to keep the distressed marine mammal, a female calf, alive until the tide came back up.

> **She was very calm... It was awesome to watch.**
> Hermann Meuter

He said the group placed blankets on top of the whale and poured seawater over her.

Eventually, the tide rose again and the whale was able to leave the rocks.

"It was incredible to see how careful and how calm she was to get herself to negotiate herself out of the situation," he said.

"She was very calm, very patient. It was awesome to watch."

Around 4:15 p.m., as the tide rose, she slowly moved forward and gave "one kick with her tail and she was free," he said.

"She took one big dive, and then she was gone," said Meuter. "She was free."

EDMONTON

Fatal shooting justified: ASIRT

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team says Edmonton police were justified in their use of force during a dramatic shootout that left a homicide suspect dead last year.

David Charles Sandaker, 24, was pinned between a fence and a police tactical vehicle in the area of 51 Avenue and 149A Street on May 11, 2014, when police attempted to arrest him. A Canada-wide warrant had been issued for his arrest, and police knew Sandaker would not be cooperative if confronted.

According to the ASIRT report, when the man was struck by the vehicle he was pointing a handgun at the driver of the tactical vehicle and began firing a .45 calibre semi-automatic handgun at officers, wounding one.

Four tactical officers returned fire, striking Sandaker, who remained pinned between the vehicle and the fence. When the vehicle was finally moved, it was determined Sandaker had suffered fatal gunshot wounds.

The police officer was treated in hospital and later released.

The ASIRT report, released Thursday, concludes officers were "lawfully placed" and that the use of force was reasonable and justified in all circumstances.

ASIRT is an independent body that investigates incidents involving Alberta's police that have resulted in serious injury or death.

METRO

3 die in Quebec fire

DRUMMONDVILLE

Eight others injured in 'apocalyptic' building blaze

Quebec provincial police say three people died in a fire in a Quebec apartment complex on Thursday.

Police are confirming three bodies were found, but did not immediately provide any details on the victims.

Eight other people were injured in the fire in Drummondville, midway between Montreal and Quebec City.

One witness to the fire described the scene as "apocalyptic," with residents screaming from their balconies.

The cause of the fire remains unclear but it was believed to have started on the second floor of the three-storey, 30-unit building.

Provincial police Sgt. Aurelie Guindon did not specify the extent of the injuries suffered by the eight people.

"We're talking about three people who are still missing, so maybe three potential victims," she told a news conference. "But we'll have to wait until the search is over to confirm any deaths."

Occupant Isabelle Sawyer escaped after people knocked at her door to tell her to flee her first-floor apartment.

"When we got out, I saw the flames, the smoke," she told RDI, Radio-Canada's all-news channel. "It was burning like a house of cards. I heard people screaming on balconies. It was apocalyptic."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Forensic identification tents are set up at the scene of a fire in an apartment building in Drummondville, Que., that killed three people Thursday. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

> **It was burning like a house of cards.**
> Isabelle Sawyer

CRIME

Man robbing house points gun at girl, 7

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

A distraught seven-year-old girl had a gun pointed at her before handing over a jar of coins to intruders during a recent home invasion in Vancouver.

Vancouver police say the girl and her family won't soon get over the trauma of the violent armed robbery on June 17, in which two men forced their way into a home in the 3300 block of Dieppe Street in east Vancouver, stole a number of valuables and sent a man to hospital with head injuries.

"You can only imagine what kind of impact this will have on this young girl," said Vancouver police spokesperson Sgt. Randy Fincham.

"It's not something this family will ever forget."

Fincham said the two suspects wearing reflective construction vests forced their way into the home through the front door. Several adults were home at the time.

As the home invasion was happening, the young girl entered the same room as the suspects.

"One of the two robbers turned his attention to the young girl and demanded money from the young girl," said Fincham. "The only money she knew of was in the jar. She gave it to them hoping these guys would take the jar and go."

But the robbery continued until the men had stolen several items, including a rare Rolex Yachtmaster II watch, and physically assaulted one of the adult males.

One suspect was armed with a handgun, but no shots were fired during the incident.

Fincham said there is nothing in the family's background to "cause concern" or help investigators understand why this family was targeted.

The first suspect is a white man between the ages of 25 and 45. He has a slim build, shaved head and full sleeve tattoos on both arms.

The second suspect is a dark-skinned man, believed to be in his 20s, with a medium build and a thin beard. He was wearing a Puma baseball cap.

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PM greets fire crew

WILDFIRES

Time for a national fire strategy, politicians say

With the hillside smoking above him, Prime Minister Stephen Harper met Thursday with a crew who have been fighting an out-of-control wildfire near West Kelowna, B.C.

Harper, Premier Christy Clark and others toured an area where residents from 70 homes were chased out by the flames Monday.

The prime minister thanked all crews and first responders who have been battling wildfires across the country.

"We know these are tough and are sometimes dangerous jobs and these efforts really are appreciated by everybody," he said.

Harper said he has spoken with both Clark and Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall about the need to improve how such devastating fires are fought.

"When the dust settles, so to speak, on all of this, we're obviously going to sit down and assess what new or different needs to be done in the future, what we can do in terms of better co-ordination of resources, mitigation — we'll look at all those things."

Clark said both she and Wall have asked Ottawa to support provinces through an enhanced military presence and a national cache of technology that could be deployed during wildfires.

"The next step in how to make sure that we prevent fires in the following season, what we do nationally, is a conversation that we need to have after this fire season is over," she said. "We gotta be on top of this now and it's all hands on deck right now."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and B.C. Premier Christy Clark thank firefighters working on the fire lines near West Kelowna, B.C., on Thursday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

> **We know these are tough and sometimes dangerous jobs.**
> PM Stephen Harper

Parts of northern Saskatchewan have been devastated by fires that at one point forced thousands from their homes.

On Thursday, a thick haze cloaked the Westside Road fire in the Okanagan community. Smoke could be seen billowing from the mountain as water bombers whizzed overhead. The blaze is one of 250 wildfires currently burning across B.C.

Fire information officer Noelle Kekula said a short break from hot, dry weather allowed six skimmer aircraft to attack the Westside blaze.

Evacuees from the fire clutched yellow forms and volunteers carried trays of sandwiches in and out of a temporary evacuation centre set up at the Westside Lions Community Hall Thursday. The centre opened Monday when the evacuations began. THE CANADIAN PRESS

PUBLIC HEALTH

Stroke survivors need services: MD

A new study suggests the number of Canadians living with stroke-induced disabilities will rise substantially over the next couple of decades.

More people are surviving strokes — a good news story about what can be a devastating, even fatal, attack on the brain.

But the study's authors say that with an aging and expanding population, this country will face a significant increase in the number of people who need stroke rehabilitation and other forms of support.

The study estimates there were about 405,000 people living with a stroke disability in Canada in 2013 — nearly 30 per cent more than was previously estimated. And it says that number could increase to between 654,000 and 726,000 by 2038.

Dr. Mark Bayley, one of the authors, says more research is needed to find ways to help people overcome or cope with the aftereffects of stroke.

"The good news is that more people are surviving their stroke," said Bayley, the medical director of the brain and spinal cord rehabilitation program at the Toronto Rehab Institute.

"And therefore we're concerned that we need to be ready for how those people are going to need to be supported and also cared for and how we can optimize their quality of life while they're recovering from their stroke or after their stroke."

The study was published Thursday in the journal Stroke. It was funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation Canadian Partnership for Stroke Recovery.

It's estimated that about 36 per cent of people who survive a stroke will still have significant disabilities five years after the event. Those can include problems with mobility, speech and brain functioning.

Bayley said the 36 per cent figure is probably low because it may not capture people who are living with the more subtle effects of TIAs or mini-strokes. He suggests the need for health services to help stroke victims recover and function is an issue of serious public health concern.

"The problem is that access to rehabilitation, both as an early inpatient and as a later person living in the community, is highly variable in Canada." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Fibromyalgia doubles drivers' collision risk

Drivers who have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia appear to have an elevated risk of being involved in motor vehicle crashes, even years after their diagnosis, research suggests.

A study in the July issue of the Journal of Rheumatology found that individuals with fibromyalgia had more than twice the risk of being in a serious automobile accident that sent them to a hospital emergency room, compared with the driving population as a whole. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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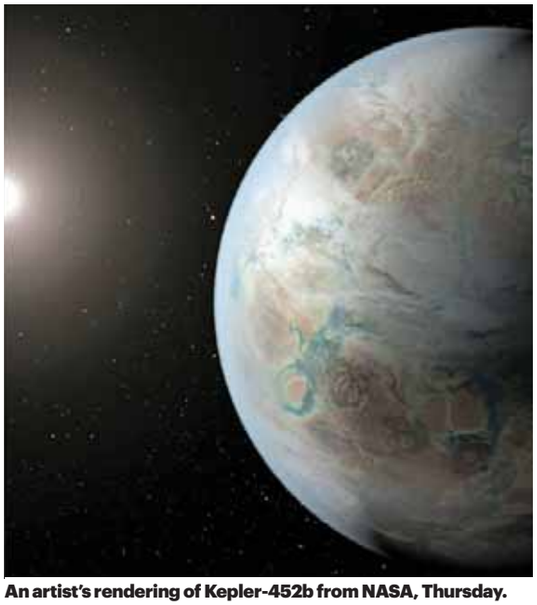

An artist's rendering of Kepler-452b from NASA, Thursday.
NASA/AMES/JPL-CALTECH/T. PYLE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Cousin' to Earth found

SPACE

Planet orbits habitable zone of its sun-like star, NASA says

Scientists have identified a "close cousin" to Earth that's orbiting a sun-like star and might harbour life.

"It is the closest thing that we have to another place that somebody else might call home," said Jon Jenkins from NASA's Ames Research Center in California.

The researchers announced their discovery Thursday, based on observations from NASA's Kepler space telescope.

This older, bigger cousin to Earth is called Kepler-452b. What makes this planet remarkable is that it orbits its star at about the same distance that Earth orbits the sun. What's more, its home star looks to be similar to our sun. Based on what scientists know today, Jenkins noted it's the nearest thing to another Earth-sun twin system.

"Today the Earth is a little less lonely because there's a new kid on the block," Jenkins said during a news conference. He led the team that discovered Kepler-452b.

The last Kepler discovery that had scientists gushing was just over a year ago. That close-to-Earth-size planet, Kepler-186f, also was in the habitable zone of its star. But that faint dwarf star was unlike our sun.

John Grunsfeld, NASA's science mission chief, emphasized that the exoplanet system identified Thursday — "a pretty good close cousin to the Earth and our sun" — is the closet so far. "And I really emphasize the 'so far.'"

The planet-hunting Kepler will keep churning out new discoveries, Grunsfeld noted, and possibly find even better matches for "Earth 2.0."

Kepler was launched in 2009 and has nearly 5,000 potential exoplanets to its credit — worlds beyond our solar system. It is helping to address such fundamental questions as where do we come from and where are we headed, and arguably the biggest question of all: Are we alone in the universe?

While scientists are uncertain whether Planet 452b is rocky like Earth, they believe there's a better than even chance it is.

As for the age and size, it is about 6 billion years old, 1.5 billion years older than Earth, and 60 per cent larger in diameter than our home planet. Its star, Kepler 452, is also older and bigger, as well as brighter than our sun. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

> **Today the Earth is a little less lonely because there's a new kid on the block.**
> Jon Jenkins, NASA scientist

UNITED STATES

Texas jail death not homicide: Officials

The autopsy of a woman who was found dead in a Texas jail revealed no injuries that would suggest she died in a violent homicide, authorities said Thursday.

Waller County prosecutor Warren Diepraam discussed details of the autopsy of 28-year-old Sandra Bland, who authorities say was found hanging in her jail cell on July 13.

The autopsy showed that Bland had no defensive injuries on her hands that would typically indicate a struggle, the prosecutor said. Some lacerations or abrasions were found on her wrists. Those injuries were consistent with a struggle while being handcuffed.

The marks around Bland's neck were consistent with a suicide, he said.

Bland was arrested three days before she was found dead. Her family and friends dispute the official finding. Texas Rangers and the FBI are investigating.

Bland's death comes after nearly a year of heightened national scrutiny of police dealings with black suspects, especially those who have been killed by officers or die in police custody. It has resonated on social media, with posts questioning the official account and featuring the hashtags #JusticeForSandy and #WhatHappenedToSandyBland.

The sheriff said Wednesday that no one gained access to the cell and contributed to Bland's death.

Bland's family has said she was not despondent and was looking forward to starting a new job at her alma mater, Prairie View A&M University.

However, Bland posted a video to her Facebook page in March, saying she was suffering from "a little bit of depression as well as PTSD," or post-traumatic stress disorder. At least one friend has said she was just venting after a bad day. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Syrian groups OK plan

MIDDLE EAST

Opposition parties agree on 'road map' to end civil war

Syria's two main political opposition groups agreed on Thursday on a unified "road map" for a political solution to the country's long-running civil war, representatives of the groups said.

The two parties have been trying for years to reach a common understanding on how to end the war in Syria. Their agreement came as the UN envoy, Staffan de Mistura, was in Damascus to press efforts to find a political solution to the country's war.

But violence continued on the ground and suspected Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) militants fired at a Turkish military outpost from inside Syrian territory on Thursday, killing a Turkish soldier and wounding two others. Turkish troops retaliated to the attack and at least one ISIL militant was killed, according to Turkish official Suleyman Tapsiz, the governor for the Kilis province.

The attack follows a suicide bombing in a Turkish town near the Syrian border on Monday which killed 32 people. Authorities have blamed the attack on militants linked to ISIL.

A Syrian refugee works outside her tent at an informal settlement near the Syrian border on the outskirts of Mafraq, Jordan, Thursday. MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

> **We are breaking the parable of lack of unity.**
> NCB executive committee member Khalaf Dawohd

Meanwhile in Brussels, where the Syrian opposition groups have been meeting, representatives of the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) and the National Coordination Body for the Forces of Democratic Change (NCB) said they would announce details of their agreement at a news conference the following day.

Members of the SNC, the main political group in exile, have long accused the Damascus-based NCB, whose leaders have been tolerated by the Syrian government, of being too lenient and even complicit with President Bashar al-Assad's government. Members of the NCB, in turn, have often accused the SNC of being bankrolled by oil-rich Arab Gulf countries.

Their disagreements have contributed to the notorious divisions within the Syrian opposition.

"Today we are breaking the parable of lack of unity within the opposition," Khalaf Dawohd, a member of the NCB's executive committee, told The Associated Press from Brussels.

Hadi al-Bahra, a senior member of the SNC, said the agreement bolsters the unity and position of the opposition.

"It is a message to the international community to exert pressure and discuss seriously how to bring this (Syrian) regime to the table for a political transition," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOUISIANA

2 dead in theatre shooting

A gunman opened fire at a movie theatre in Lousiana on Thursday night, killing at least one person and injuring at least six others before shooting himself, officials said.

The shooting took place at The Grand Theatre in the city of Lafayette, said Clay Henry, vice-president of operations for Acadian Ambulance. Henry said eight people were brought to the hospital and that two, including the gunman, were pronounced dead on arrival. He said emergency workers got the call to go to the theatre at about 7:30 p.m.

The Daily Advertiser quoted City Marshal Brian Pope as saying that the shooter turned the gun on himself after firing at the others, and that six people were injured. The shooting happened about 20 minutes into a 7 p.m. showing of the movie "Trainwreck," according to the newspaper. The paper also quoted theatregoer Katie Domingue, who said she saw "an older white man" standing up and shooting down into the theatre.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metro

Nairobi biker with an Obama flag. BEN CURTIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Africa trip draws flak

KENYA, ETHIOPIA

Rights groups slam Obama's itinerary over leaders' abuses

U.S. President Barack Obama's trip to Kenya and Ethiopia is drawing criticism that the countries are heavy-handed on human rights and basic democratic freedoms.

Obama will become the first sitting U.S. president to visit Kenya, his ancestral homeland, when he arrives Friday to attend a business summit and meetings with President Uhuru Kenyatta. And he'll be the first U.S. president to visit Ethiopia when he lands there Sunday to confer with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and to address the African Union, which is headquartered there.

"While both countries face real security threats, we are concerned by the way in which each government has responded, often with abusive security measures and increased efforts to stifle civil society and the media," Human Rights Watch and other advocacy organizations and analysts said in a letter to Obama.

"Many of these initiatives undermine core human rights protections and the rule of law and are also counterproductive when it comes to reducing insecurity."

Obama said he will stress during the trip that the economic growth that Africans seek depends on good governance, including free and fair elections, strong democratic institutions, freedom of speech and the press, vibrant civic participation and respect for human rights.

"Some African nations have made impressive progress on these fronts," Obama said in an opinion piece published Thursday by the website The Root. "Others have not. My trip will be an opportunity to address these issues candidly, both publicly and privately in my meetings with leaders."

The White House says the trip, Obama's fourth to Africa as president, is an opportunity to promote trade and investment, but also to check in with Horn of Africa partners in the fight against Islamic extremism.

> **My trip will be an opportunity to address these issues candidly.**
> Barack Obama

The U.S. and Kenya co-operate to counter al-Shabab, the Islamic militant group based in Somalia that has carried out numerous attacks in Kenya. Ethiopia shares intelligence with the U.S. and has sent troops across the border to Somalia to address instability there. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Clinton endorses 'Black lives matter'

Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Rodham Clinton has praised South Carolina leaders for removing the Confederate flag from the statehouse grounds in the wake of the killing of nine black churchgoers in Charleston, S.C., last month.

But Clinton said that action was only symbolic, and that all Americans should unite behind the rallying cry "Black lives matter." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Columbine killer's mom pens memoir

A memoir by the mother of Columbine shooter Dylan Klebold is scheduled for 2016, and will be launched with a prime-time interview with ABC's Diane Sawyer, Crown Publishers announced Thursday.

In 1999, Dylan Klebold and fellow senior student Eric Harris killed 12 students and one teacher at the Columbine, Colo., high school before taking their own lives. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wildfires out of control in Montana, California

Firefighters braced Thursday against a fresh run by a wildfire that sent tourists fleeing from hotels and campgrounds in Montana's Glacier National Park, while a blaze threatening hundreds of homes in Northern California shot flames 30 metres in the air.

Both states are ravaged by drought, and strengthening winds greeted crews battling the Rocky Mountain blaze, which has burned more than 15 square kilometres of the Montana park. The California fire threatened 200 homes near Napa Valley and its smoke was seen as far away as San Francisco. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Loblaw shutting 52 stores

RETAIL

Pharmacies, grocery outlets included in closures

Loblaw Companies Ltd. plans to shut down 52 unprofitable stores in its chain of retail outlets by early next year as it seeks to boost operating profit.

The company said in its second-quarter earnings report Thursday that the closures will take place over the next 12 months and save $35 million to $40 million in annual operating income despite the loss of $300 million in sales.

Loblaw president and executive chairman Galen Weston Jr. said in a conference call with analysts that the company was focused on finding efficiencies as growth slows.

In a normal year, he added, the company would close 10 to 15 stores.

"Yes, it's an increase, but it's not radically different," he said. "It doesn't signal any kind of change from a strategic perspective."

Loblaw Companies Ltd. has not yet identified which stores in its chain of retail outlets will close by next year. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The closures are distributed across the country, he said, and affect around one per cent of the company's total retail square footage.

In its latest annual report, the company had more than 2,300 locations for its many brands, including Loblaws, Shoppers Drug Mart, No Frills and Joe Fresh.

$300 million

Closures will mean a loss of $300 million in sales but could save up to $40 million in operating income.

Weston would not identify which locations are due to close as the company has yet to notify affected employees, but he said the list included gas stations, Joe Fresh locations and select pharmacies and grocery stores.

Loblaw chief financial officer Richard Dufresne said the company did a review of all of its stores following the completion of its buyout of Shoppers Drug Mart last year and identified 52 that were consistently underperforming and unprofitable.

The company said in March it would build 50 new stores and renovate or improve more than 100 existing ones this year as part of a $1.2 billion expansion. Weston said those plans are still on track.

On Thursday, Weston said the 52 closures included the previously announced cutbacks at Joe Fresh's U.S. operations, but would not make a "material change" to the clothing line's Canadian locations.

The company announced the closures as it reported a second-quarter profit of $185 million or 45 cents per share in its latest quarter compared with a loss of $456 million or $1.13 per share a year ago.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Walmart takes over Chinese online retailer

Walmart wants to make a bigger play for Chinese consumers online. The world's largest retailer purchased the remaining stake it didn't own in China's Yihaodian, an online retailer. Walmart is attempting to follow consumers as they migrate to the Internet in China, a country where the retailer has struggled to adjust to buying habits and local competition. Yihaodian, founded in 2008, sells more than eight million products.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

market minute

DOLLAR 76.69¢ (-0.01¢)

TSX 14,265.37 (-41.75)

OIL $48.45 US (-74¢)

GOLD $1,094.10 US (+$2.60)

NATURAL GAS: $2.816 US (-8.1¢)
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Greece ready for talks

BAILOUT

Creditors expected to arrive in Athens Friday

Discussions over Greece's third bailout in five years are set to begin in Athens imminently after Greece's parliament approved Thursday tough new conditions set by European creditors.

Officials in Athens and at the European Union said negotiators are expected to start arriving on Friday, marking the first time high-level talks will be held in the Greek capital since Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras' left-wing government assumed power in late January.

The news came hours after the Greek parliament approved a second round of reforms demanded by Greece's creditors before the negotiations could start over a three-year financial bailout expected to be worth 85 billion euros ($93 billion US).

Without the money, Greece would be unable to pay the debts due over the coming three years and would likely be forced to leave the euro, Europe's shared currency.

Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras reacts during an emergency parliament session Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Over the past week, parliament has approved two sets of creditor demands — the first introduced sweeping sales tax increases, the second concerned judicial and banking reforms.

Despite facing a rebellion among his own party's ranks in both votes, Tsipras' coalition government has survived. He relied on opposition parties to push the measures through.

"We have chosen a compromise that forces us to implement a program in which we do not believe, and we will implement it because the alternatives are tough," Tsipras said. "We are summoned today to legislate under a state of emergency."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Subsidized phones hit Rogers' profits

Higher costs from retaining its wireless customers left another mark on the profits of Rogers Communications Inc. during the second quarter, though the company fared better than analysts expected.

The telecommunications provider said Thursday that net income dropped 10 per cent in the period, which coincided with CRTC rule changes that eliminated cancellation fees for wireless contracts after two years.

Rogers posted net income of $363 million, or 70 cents per share, for the period ended June 30. That was down from $405 million or 76 cents in the same quarter last year.

Rogers has been scurrying throughout this year to keep wireless subscribers from straying to competitors by offering subsidized phones in exchange for a fresh contract that locks them into another two years of service.

32,000

Rogers' cable TV subscribers slid as more Canadians cancelled their packages. The division saw a decline of 32,000 TV subscribers and 11,000 landline customers.

The so-called double cohort, a result of the CRTC rule changes that also eliminated three-year contracts, was expected to intensify competition as wireless companies tried to lure each other's customers.

About 12 per cent of Rogers customers were still on three-year wireless contracts as of June 3, the day the rule change took full effect, the company said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

New cars boost retail sales

Shoppers buying new cars and trucks helped boost retail sales in May by 1.0 per cent to $43 billion in Canada, the third increase in four months, Statistics Canada said Thursday.

Retail sales were up in nine of 11 subsectors, representing 92 per cent of retail trade. Retail sales were up in nine provinces in May with Ontario, Nova Scotia and, to a lesser extent, British Columbia accounting for most of the increase. Saskatchewan was the lone province to post weaker sales, edging down 0.1 per cent. Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers rose 1.3 per cent, boosted by a 2.0 per cent increase at new car dealers. Used car dealers reported a 1.2 per cent drop in sales.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR
Permanent Guardianship Order To
Marten Reimer

Take notice that on the **19th day of August 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta,** a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Permanent Guardianship Order**; of your child born on **June 3, 2015**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Jackie Ellice; Leanne Baines; Daniella Eggink
Calgary Region, Child and Family Services
Phone: (403) 297-2978

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR
Temporary Guardianship Order To
Nicole White

Take notice that on the **24th day of August 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta**, a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Temporary Guardianship Order**; of your children born on **April 4, 2012, December 1, 2009** and **November 23, 2008**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Jackie Ellice; Leanne Baines; Daniella Eggink
Calgary Region, Child and Family Services
Phone: (403) 297-2978

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR
Permanent Guardianship Order To
Brandon Michaud

Take notice that on the **17th day of August 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta**, a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Permanent Guardianship Order;** of your child born on **August 31, 2014**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Jackie Ellice; Leanne Baines; Daniella Eggink
Calgary Region, Child and Family Services
Phone: (403) 297-2978

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR
Temporary Guardianship Order To
Larissa Jahnke

Take notice that on the **7th day of August 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta,** a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Custody Order; Temporary Guardianship Order** of your child born on **July 13, 2014.** If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Jackie Ellice; Leanne Baines; Daniella Eggink
Calgary Region, Child and Family Services
Phone: (403) 297-2978

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR
Temporary Guardianship Order To
Chris Kalyn

Take notice that on the **24th day of August 2015 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta**, a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Temporary Guardianship Order;** of your children born on **April 4, 2012, December 1, 2009** and **November 23, 2008.** If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

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metro VIEWS

Your essential daily news

WEEKEND, July 24-26, 2015

THE KOHLER REPORT: ON CELLPHONES AND AWKWARDNESS

I will continue using a landline until it's so old it becomes as cool as a mason jar is today.

I am routinely mocked for the fact that I still have a landline.

When I call people from the number, they love to joke, "Who is this, my grandma?" But while I admit that keeping a home phone is costly — and looks as outdated in my living room as a bowl of potpourri — it's well worth it. It's the only phone in my life I can count on. Not like that flaky, inconsistent, deadbeat-dad version of a phone I call my "cell."

I don't know if the technology has declined or if my patience has waned, but I often find that the experience of talking on a cellphone is as much an existential crisis as it is a conversation.

Like those calls where you can hear the person about half the time, as if someone were pointing a remote control at them and pressing "mute" every few seconds. The first couple of times it happens, you might say "What was that?" but after a while you start feeling like the annoying one, even though it's them you can't hear. You try your best to piece the sentences together using only the words you have ("I've been…and…depressed …I'm…so… eating … know it … helps?") And you're like, "Yeah, I find eating ice cream therapeutic, too," and just hope that what you're saying makes sense.

Or what about those calls that make your friend sound like they're in an echo chamber, when you happen to know she's just a few blocks away at a Starbucks? Or those times you're trying to talk to a business associate who sounds like they're conducting their side of the meeting under water; it's really stressful when your livelihood depends on someone whose every word seems to be caught inside a bubble.

Or what about that quirk of technology that makes it so the person who's talking can't hear you until they stop. This makes it impossible to interject. They can't hear you if you laugh or say things like, "Right, right" or "Mm-hmm." Cellphones strip you of half the tools you need to have a normal, healthy conversation.

By the way, I don't have some 1999 Nokia piece of poo, nor do I use that service provider that's available only at 7-11. I have an iPhone 6 and my service provider rhymes with Smell Us. Is this the best we can do?

And I know what you're going to say: If you don't like talking on your cell, then just do like the Millennials and text. But I don't want to text — it takes too long and it's impersonal and it's destroying us like the impact that destroyed the dinosaurs.

No. What I will do is continue using my landline until Bell decides to stop providing me with — and charging me through the nose for — the service. I will continue using a landline until it's so old it becomes as cool as a mason jar is today.

Mock me all you want. At least I'll be able to hear you.

Rebecca Kohler is a standup comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter @becca_kohler.

Were the Pan Am Games worth it? Visit metronews.ca to answer our poll.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

How two stubborn people shape up at marriage boot camp

Welcome to the midway point of the speediest season of the year.

Or for me, the end of marriage boot camp.

C. — my American boyfriend — was visiting for a few months. As our time wound down, and people asked him how it's been, "marriage boot camp" was his answer.

We had a lot to pack into very little time and space, playing house in my one-room studio apartment. We'd been telling each other over Skype that we wanted to be together. This summer, we actually had to be together, morning and night, and all weekend long.

As two previously very single people, it was a negotiation to even cross the street. One person would step out into traffic, while the other tugged them back.

As two stubborn people, we could suck the fun out of a sunny afternoon on a patio as we learned to debate, kindly.

We discovered what it's like to be around the moody love of your life, what to say, and when to shut up.

For brief moments, the tension felt like that big wooden wall on an obstacle course: impossible to overcome.

My way of working through things is to talk, talk, talk. C.'s musings are more likely to drop in unexpectedly from thin air, like a falling feather.

But we did talk about what marriage would look like — or more often, not look like.

"Our kids are going to run around barefoot," C. warned me one day.

"I don't want to fight over money," I declared. Our statements acted like warning shots across each others' bows. Beware! This is what it's going to be like forever!

Marriage boot camp did clarify things. Chief among them, how sure we both are. How happy we both are. Except for when it wasn't, the summer was the most fun.

I've been wondering how much people do this — talk about what marriage will be like — before they pull the trigger.

So I called my most communicative, inquisitive of friends. She and her husband spent four evenings, a few hours each time, talking about what marriage would be like, in order to write their vows.

"People get so busy with planning their wedding, it's like they spend more time thinking about seating arrangements than the details of what they're vowing to," she said.

C. and I aren't at risk of that. For a long-distance relationship on fast-forward, it's perhaps not surprising we attended marriage boot camp before engagement. And as with all good boot camps, I'm feeling stronger.

Happy face/Sad face

From **chicken sickness** to **landsliding lakes,**
Metro weighs in on the news making headlines this week

Forgetting past failures

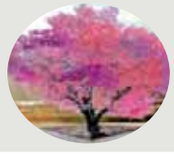
News of the first drug that slows down Alzheimer's has scientists forgetting how hopeless they felt about managing memory loss. Stage-3 clinical trials — the last step before the pill goes to market — of a drug called solanezumab showed the progress of dementia slowing by a third, if treatment started early. More trials will be needed to confirm the results, but science is close to creating a memory medication that does more than just reduce symptoms. SOURCE: BBC

Beware of fowl play

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control has ID'd an unusual culprit in a 40-state salmonella outbreak: Backyard chickens. Urban farmers, the CDC says, "are bringing live poultry into their homes, and ... kissing or cuddling with live poultry." Chickens harbour salmonella bacteria that's harmless to them but causes a nasty stomach bug in humans. Handwashing — and minimizing contact with feathered friends — can reduce the spread.
SOURCE: WASHINGTON POST

The fastest fruit salad

Sam Van Aken, a professor at Syracuse University, uses crafty grafting to create trees that bear 40 different kinds of stone fruit, including heirloom varieties of plums and apricots. Despite his choice of materials, he's not a botanist, but an artist. A tree he planted in 2011 now has all 40 varieties grafted on. In four years or so, it will be blooming periodically throughout the summer, producing a different kind of fruit each time.
SOURCE: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



Lake braces for spectacular slide

Some time in the next few months, a small lake perched 600 feet above the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories will burst through the slice of earth holding it back — and fall. It will be a spectacular sight that transforms the landscape, and melting permafrost caused by climate change is to blame, scientists say. The unnamed lake near Fort McPherson is buttressed by frozen ground that has not thawed to this extent since the end of the last ice age.
SOURCE: THE CANADIAN PRESS

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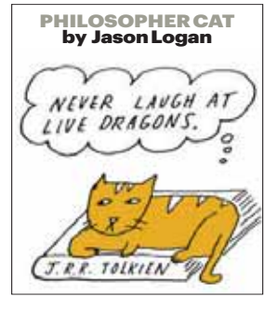

metro LIFE

Your essential daily news

Jurassic World now the third highest-grossing film in history

Last chance for redemption

COMEDY

Can Pixels save Sandler's career after a string of flops?

IN FOCUS

Richard Crouse

Matthew Lintz, left, as Matt, and Adam Sandler as Sam Brenner with Q*bert, in Pixels, which opens nationwide today. SONY PICTURES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

From a career point of view, Pixels may be the most important movie of Adam Sandler's career. The big-budget action comedy sees the comedian help save the world from aliens who attack using classic video arcade games like PAC-MAN, Donkey Kong and Centipede as models for their assaults.

In real life, it's not Donkey Kong Sandler needs to battle, but audience apathy. A string of box office flops, controversies and terrible reviews — critic Liam Maguren was so horrified by Sandler's 2011 "comedy" Jack and Jill he wrote, "Burn this. This cannot be seen. By anyone" — have threatened to torpedo his career.

Even his own studio seemed to have turned against him. In last year's Sony email hack, one employee complained, "we continue to be saddled with the mundane, formulaic Adam Sandler films."

Movies like Billy Madison, Happy Gilmour and Big Daddy were hits that established his persona as the angry but sweet everyman, a misfit character he trotted out for two decades. Occasionally he'd get serious in pictures like Punch-Drunk Love or Reign Over Me and soak up some good reviews, but by and large, the Sandleronian oeuvre has been ripe with anger management issues and jokes of ... how to put this delicately: a gastrointestinal nature. Not highbrow, but that's OK — not everything has to be Noel Coward — as long as audiences care.

But at some point, it seemed they stopped caring.

Perhaps it was the inconsistent nature of his movies. Just when you think he's turned a corner with the excellent Reign Over Me into interesting adult roles he slaps you in the face with the zero-star rated follow-up I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry.

Or maybe it's quality control issues. Last year Kevin Nealon told me about being offered a role in the Sandler-produced Grandma's Boy.

"It was so lowball and crass," said Nealon. "I thought it might be a little embarrassing to be in that one. So I told Sandler I'd probably pass on it and he called me and said, 'I really hope you do this because if you don't do it and it's a big hit I'll feel bad, but if you do it and it's not a big hit, no one is going to see it anyway.'"

That attitude may be realistic but it doesn't exactly speak to high standards. More than that, however, is the static nature of Sandler's comedy. His everyman character hasn't changed much throughout the years. Usually these days he lives in nicer houses or has more money but it's the same old shtick.

The old saying, "He got bigger, but didn't grow up," perfectly applies to Sandler.

He may have matured (chronologically at least) but the urination gags and rageaholic jokes that characterize his comedy haven't.

We don't need to feel sorry for Adam Sandler. He has movies in the pipeline and a new deal with Netflix, but Pixels is still an important moment for him. Rolling Stone called his last film, The Cobbler, "beyond awful and beyond repair," and it went on to become his biggest flop to date.

If Pixels is a hit, and it may be, the trailer generated 34.3 million views worldwide in its first 24 hours online, he will be redeemed — at least until his next movie's new round of toilet humour and cleavage shots.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Paper Towns ★★★
Irrational Man ★
American Heist ★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
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★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT

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Jake gets fighting fit for boxing drama

TRANSFORMATION

Gyllenhaal piles on muscle and emotion in Southpaw

Richard Crouse
For Metro

As World Middleweight Boxing Champion Billy Hope in the new film Southpaw, Jake Gyllenhaal learned a thing or two about anger. He plays a man ruled by fury who must learn to fight with his head, not just his fists.

"That journey was really interesting for me," says Gyllenhaal, "the idea that I could explore that in my own anger. Sometimes things pop up, things that could be very destructive in my own life, like my own anger and I think, 'Man, if I was only curious about this feeling instead of letting it kind of control me. If I could only stop and say, 'What is that?'

"I saw this Australian comedian talking about gun control and he was saying, 'Everyone should own a musket because by the time you finish putting the powder in and everything it takes a minute-and-a-half and by the time a minute-and-a-half has passed (the anger is gone) and you're like, 'You're not a bad guy. It's fine.'"

Gyllenhaal says studying the character set him on a "journey about being curious about myself," which seems counterintuitive. Doesn't the actor inform the character?

"I think the experience of preparing for a role, meeting people along the way while you're preparing for a role and the experience of that is what I learn from. It is really that that teaches me.

"The people I spend time with, the accumulation, that's what I learn from. I don't think I bring my own experience yet to a role. Right now my life is about learning from other people."

> **I think the idea of being tough is also about admitting your fears.**
> Jake Gyllenhaal

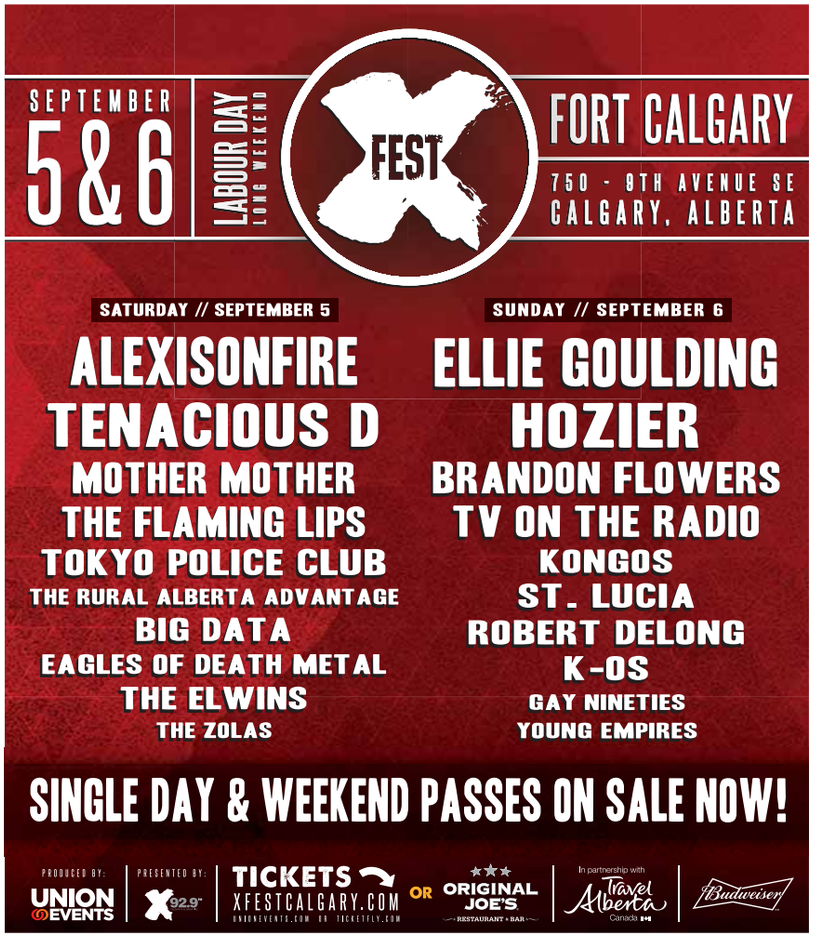
One revelation from his time inhabiting Billy Hope's persona was insight to what made Billy tick — fear.

"Billy is a really scared character who is fronting in some ways to present himself in a certain way. I think fear is a great motivator for him. That was a big thing. I think the idea of being tough is also about admitting your fears."

The 34-year-old actor certainly has no fear when choosing roles. From the extreme weight loss of Nightcrawler to Southpaw's physical transformation — he gained 15 pounds of sheer muscle — Gyllenhaal is curating a challenging and interesting resumé.

"I think the people I admire as artists are the people who really listen to themselves even if it is to the detriment of what people might consider success. I'd rather be myself and do what I love than listen to someone else and follow that role and be unhappy."

Jake Gyllenhaal plays Middleweight Boxing Champion Billy Hope in Southpaw, which comes out July 24. SCOTT GARFIELD/THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



INTERVIEW

50 Cent on acting, Southpaw

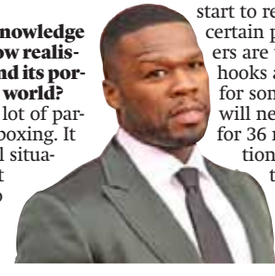
Matt Prigge
For Metro

The day before our phone interview with 50 Cent is the day he publicly declares bankruptcy. It doesn't take long to get an email asking that we abstain from mentioning his business affairs, as well as a couple other heavy topics. Despite this, 50 Cent is in good spirits, friendly and talkative when discussing Southpaw, the boxing drama starring Jake Gyllenhaal as Billy Hope, an anguished pugilist angling for a comeback after the death of his wife (Rachel McAdams).

The rapper and businessman plays Jordan Mains, his manager-promoter, and it's a subject he knows a lot about, having been involved in boxing for even longer than he's been appearing in movies.

Given your knowledge of boxing, how realistic did you find its portrayal of this world?

There were a lot of parallels to real boxing. It felt like a real situation. It wasn't pretending to be someone who wasn't a real person. There's a point where I'm saying, "On his way out make sure he doesn't break some s—." That's an afterthought, but it defines how he handles circumstances with his fighters. The model they live by is: if it makes money, it makes sense. That's Jordan Mains and Billy Hope's world view. They've been on this journey together. He didn't earn anything if Billy didn't earn anything.



50 Cent. GETTY IMAGES

Jordan starts off as someone who really seems to have Billy's back but eventually reveals he values business over their friendship. Do you feel he adopts a defendable position?

Well, he loves Billy initially. But what happens with fighters is when you use logic with people aren't using that as a compass, you can become frustrated. You'll start to resent them at certain points. The fighters are throwing jazz hooks and uppercuts for something that will net $250 million for 36 minutes of action. It's tough to tell them what their fight is worth. They expect so much for fighting the top guys in their weight class. Eventually they just want all the money. When they become a name you don't argue with them, because they don't need anybody else to make the next fight. If a manager says, "F— this, I'm leaving," then there will be a whole new group of people who will come to him and say, "Alright, champ, let's make the next fight."

Do you see many parallels between boxing and the music industry? Both revolve heavily around stars who heavily rely on family and friends to support them.

Yeah. They come from the same places. The fighters, they're coming from low-income situations in inner cities. They can relate to not having very much. When you make it, and you get to the leagues, if you're a baseball or basketball player, or you get to the championship, if you're a fighter, you say, "When I do get there I'm going to be straight. I'm going to look out for my people." Their happiness is connected to those closest to them. If you've made it to the point where you can spend a little cash, you do things for them.

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

Journalist A.J. Liebling's best prose was about boxing, a subject so brutal that it's perplexing how he wrote so prolifically on it

I watched the trailer for Southpaw, which hits theatres July 24, the day it was released because I've never met a boxing movie I didn't like. And because the trailer reveals the tragedy that afflicts boxing champion Billy "The Great" Hope (Jake Gyllenhaal), I feel I can reveal the spoiler too: his wife (Rachel McAdams) dies and Billy loses his title, his family, his wealth — everything.

You know what that means: Billy must clobber his way back to the top. That includes a prerequisite training montage. They're my favourite, especially the sequences from the first four Rocky films (I haven't seen V through XXXV.) The first three, which I studied via VHS tapes as a kid, use the same theme song. But Rocky IV's montage is set to a different tune. While Balboa's Russian opponent Drago runs on a futuristic treadmill flashing with lights and lasers, Rocky climbs a snow-covered mountain — a mountain! — then shouts "Drago!" from the top. If that's not good movie making, I don't know what is.

My colleague and friend Lainey likes Rocky IV best. On a recent afternoon in her office, she recited from memory Rocky's soliloquy after he defeats Drago on his Siberian home turf: "If I can change, and you can change, everybody can change!" she yelled triumphantly. "Basically, Rocky conquers communism. He ends the Cold War," Lainey said. "It's a perfect movie!"

Lainey writes about gossip and no doubt she'd notice her name drop. But I'm not interested in connecting myself to celebrity (actually, Rachel McAdams went to my high school, but whatever): I'm interested in the food Lainey eats. Because although gossip is central to the human experience, food informs it.

THE MOVIE: Southpaw

THE MEAL: 'Beef and tomato'

We've been sharing lunch duties since January. The first time I tried her "beef and tomato" — marinated flank steak sliced impossibly thin, stewed tomatoes, bok choy and King mushrooms served over rice — it was like a punch to my solar plexus: it took my breathe away.

It's a dish she grew up eating. Nothing fancy, she told me. Maybe every family has one — a dish that you've had a thousand times but never tire of. A dish filled with meaning and memory.

Journalist A.J. Liebling wrote beautifully about food and memory. But his best prose was about boxing, a subject so brutal that it's perplexing how he wrote so prolifically on it — and how it's so profoundly about the human experience.

"To write about boxing is to write about oneself," Joyce Carol Oates, whose father took her to see matches as a child, said, "however elliptically, and unintentionally."

It's no wonder I love both Liebling and Carol Oates' writing because the writing you love, whether it's about food or sports, is often about love itself. And no wonder that the food that's dearest to you is the sort you want to share with the people you love most.

Lainey has promised that one day she'll teach me how to make her "beef and tomato." Part of me never wants to learn. That way she'll have to keep making it for me, forever.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

MOVIE NEWS

Amy Poehler to play NBA basketball coach

Actress and comedian Amy Poehler is set to produce and star in an upcoming comedy in which she'll take the role of a basketball coach with a chance for glory.

Currently lending her voice to Pixar's Inside Out in the role of Joy, Poehler wrapped up a seven-season run as the star of Parks and Recreation earlier this year.

Her new project will see the actress play a basketball coach whose career has fizzled out when she is called on to lead an NBA team, according to Variety.

Ike Barinholtz (The Mindy Project) will appear in the film and is also co-writing the script with David Stassen. Poehler is next set to star in Sisters with Barinholtz and Tina Fey. AFP

Amy Poehler AFP

COMEDY

Couple's misery, audience's delight

Steve Gow
For Metro

For an actor still basking in the afterglow of reaching the profession's highest pinnacle, Rosamund Pike is awfully humble about getting an Oscar nod.

"You don't think about (awards)," explained the English actress of her nomination for last year's Gone Girl. "I just hoped that it would get a really big audience, and when it did, I realized that's the biggest buzz of all — your film being watched by people going to the cinema — there's no thrill like that."

It's just that excitement of winning audiences that's inspiring Pike to enthusiastically speak out with passion about her latest project — What We Did On Our Holiday — a film she admits "had a bit of magic about it."

A bittersweet comedy that's already stolen hearts in the U.K., Holiday tells the heartwarming story of a family taking a road trip through the Scottish highlands as the unhappy husband and wife attempt to keep their impending divorce a secret from their rambunctious kids.

"It's delicious — you're looking at an absurdist comedy of family drama and then suddenly it just opens up into something you're not expecting," said Pike.

Rosamund Pike. GETTY IMAGES

"I love stories where roles are reversed so children are behaving like adults and adults, like children."

It took some spirited casting from filmmakers Guy Jenkin and Andy Hamilton (of BBC's hit-series Outnumbered) to discover mature enough children to hold their own against actors like Pike. After all, the directors are known for a unique style of semi-improvised dialogue — driven mainly by the kids.

"They know that children can be incredibly funny when allowed to have free reign of their imaginations," said Pike of the duo's technique. "So they just set up incongruous or funny situations and let (the children's) imaginations run riot."

Working under such loose, relaxed conditions may have been beneficial to Pike as well. Although Gone Girl hit theatres last year, she actually filmed Holiday immediately prior — something she credits with informing her Oscar-nominated performance as a jilted woman who suddenly goes missing.

PIKE'S PICKS

We asked Rosamund Pike to recall her biggest roles

Die Another Day (2002)
"(I wasn't) nervous because I had no sense of perspective," said Pike of her first big role playing a Bond girl.

Pride & Prejudice (2005)
"(Jane Austen) had a power to create these worlds which people can't get enough of," recalled Pike.

Gone Girl (2014)
"That was my highest point of my career so far," said Pike. STEVE GOW/FOR METRO

5 DISNEY CHARACTERS TOO COMPELLING FOR THE KINGDOM

Origin stories have been hot since Wicked became a bestseller. While Maleficent was a good effort by Disney at a darker origin story, there's definitely plenty more material to mine in Disney movies. We picked five characters whose backstories are just waiting to be turned into films, from quiet indies to provocative period pieces. **EVA KISS/METRO IN NEW YORK**

1 Mary Poppins

Considering she's got a movie named after her, we sure didn't know much about Mary. England is chockablock full of strange things, from driving on the left to Stonehenge, but a magical nanny who flits about on the wind surely must rate some level of suspicion. Where did she come from? Why does she use her considerable powers of cheeriness and musical talent in the humble service of nannying?

Our bet: She's really Pandora, working to spread her sunny disposition to make up for the dark things she unleashed on the world.

2 Jiminy Cricket

Morality tales tend to have a message for both the person who needs to learn a lesson and the mentor. Ever think that perhaps Pinocchio wasn't the only one being tested by the Blue Fairy?

Jiminy already had a boatload of personal style, but that doesn't qualify him to be the voice of reason in a little boy's ear. Maybe he wasn't always so good and honest, either, and guiding Pinocchio was his chance to find his own way.

This flick could be the fun, animal-centric version of Sister Act: maybe he was a payday loan manager or a crooked gambler who wanted to turn a new leaf. He joins Big Brothers and shepherding the boy is his way of making things right.

3 Edna

Designing a superhero's costume is half science, half art. But a younger Edna as an haute couture-wearing bookworm who could stitch a welt seam precisely timed to a centrifuge cycle would be too obvious a backstory.

Picture instead: a focused and exemplary talent in fashion design school, Edna struggled to find her niche after graduation. She finds a job making uniforms. Then one day a lab tech brings her a coat, wanting alterations done to add some flare. Edna becomes curious about some materials she finds inside the jacket's pockets.

Turns out, the technician is working to design safer clothes for people in dangerous jobs. Edna's knowledge of stitching and structuring fabric comes in handy. The two decide to collaborate on designs. Slowly, Edna's style evolves, becoming more playful and colorful. Eventually, her unique designs gain the attention of the superhero community.

Ta-da! A Bechdel test-friendly adventure about girl power and teamwork.

4 Fairy Godmother

Cinderella has a Fairy Godmother and the only time she makes herself known is to spot Cindy some designer duds and a ride to a fancy party? There's something else happening here.

Consider this: Nothing that happened in Cinderella couldn't have been accomplished without slipping a little LSD into the well to make her think the mice turned into footmen and the pumpkin into a carriage. No, the Fairy Godmother isn't a real fairy or perhaps even a godmother.

5 Genie

Hidden in a cave, only able to be retrieved by a righteous man who doesn't care for gold — whoever used their wish to set that enchanted trap must've had some taste of what Genie was capable of doing. Perhaps the Agrabah desert was the collateral damage of a prior master's megalomania? Or maybe, Genie wasn't always bound to a lamp. Maybe he was called Loki on another continent, or Kokopelli to the Native Americans, a trickster with unlimited power and no scruples. Until one day he messed with the wrong shaman, who gave him a moral code and enslaved him, condemning him to helping the same humans he'd toyed with.

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Excitable Green behind-the-scenes

ADAPTATION

Author ecstatic with his books being made into features

Ned Ehrbar
Metro | Life

Paper Towns is only the second movie made from a novel by John Green, so it's understandable that the Fault in Our Stars author is still not the most savvy person on set. It's not really a problem, except when his enthusiasm can ruin the audio for a pivotal love scene.

"I was so excited because (actor) Justice (Smith) put this line back in, 'I always think about imagining Santa complexly when I'm eating my Lucky Charms with my black Santa spoon.' I know that I wrote that line, but I also find it very funny. And I found it particularly funny when Justice was saying it," Green explains. "I was laughing the whole time they were making out, jumping up and down and yelping. But I thought I was far enough away that my joy would not be audible. But it turns out that yeah, they had to fix the audio. They have to take out my joy."

That sense of audible joy is justifiable, given the breakout success Green has found in film following similar success with his books.

Last year's Fault in Our Stars was a certified hit, and he and the team behind it are hoping for a repeat with Paper Towns. But don't expect a retread.

"This isn't Fault in Our Stars 2: Electric Boogaloo. It's clearly a very different film, and it has a very different tone and a different world," Green says. "We all knew that we were making a very different kind of movie from The Fault in Our Stars. So I didn't feel pressure, I just felt excitement.

"I was much more nervous the first time around than this time around because I knew I trusted everyone involved in the project. So for me it's just been joyful, the whole process, which is really lucky because authors generally do not feel that way about the movie adaptations of their books."

And onscreen, at least one familiar face from the previous film takes center stage, with Fault in Our Stars supporting player Nat Wolff stepping into the lead for Paper Towns. It's something Green would totally take credit for if he could.

"I'm not a movie executive, I don't know how to make movies," Green says. "But pretty much every day during the Fault in Our Stars shoot I would lean forward to the producers and say, 'You know what you guys should do? You should make a movie of Paper Towns.' And you know who should play Q? Nat Wolff.

"'Nat Wolff should play Q. Have you guys thought about Nat Wolff?' And, yeah, it worked."

> **It's just been joyful ... which is really lucky because authors generally do not feel that way about the movie adaptations.**
> John Green, author

Cara Delevingne stars in Paper Towns. HANDOUT

CARA DELEVINGNE STARS

Cara can't drive

A major part of the plot for Paper Towns involves an epic, end-of-senior-year road trip up the east coast from Orlando, Fla. to upstate New York. While Cara Delevingne's character, Margot Roth Spiegelman, is the one who sets the trip in motion by disappearing and leaving clues for neighbourhood pal Q (Nat Wolff), she hasn't had much experience on the road herself.

"I don't drive, I've never been on one. But if you're offering, I'm very happy to take you up on that offer," she says with a game grin. "I am better than Nat at driving."

In the film — and in the bestselling John Green novel upon which it is based — Margot is constantly at odds with her disapproving parents, who just don't understand her eccentric ways and have lost their patience. That was one part of the mysterious character that Delevingne had trouble relating to.

"My parents have always been very supportive of what I've wanted to do," she says. "I wanted to be an actor since I was really young and I wanted to do that as early as possible. But all they wanted was for me to be happy, to finish school and do that."

But there might be some friends' parents who think she's a bad influence, though. "No comment," she offers with a laugh when pressed on the subject.

NED EHRBAR/METRO HOLLYWOOD

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ANIMATION, COMEDY

Pixels

Director: Chris Columbus,
Starring: Adam Sandler, Peter Dinklage, Kevin James, Josh Gad

As kids in the 1980s, Sam Brenner, Will Cooper, Ludlow Lamonsoff, and Eddie "The Fire Blaster" Plant saved the world thousands of times — at 25 cents a game in the video arcades. Now, they're going to have to do it for real.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 10% Audience: 89%

DRAMA

Paper Towns

Director: Jake Schreier
Starring: Cara Delevingne, Nat Wolff

Adapted from the bestselling novel by author John Green (The Fault in Our Stars), Paper Towns is a coming-of-age story centring on Quentin and his enigmatic neighbour Margo, who loved mysteries so much she became one.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 73% Audience: 95%

DRAMA

Southpaw

Director: Antoine Fuqua
Starring: Jake Gyllenhaal, Rachel McAdams

Billy Hope seemingly has it all with an impressive career, a beautiful and loving wife an adorable daughter and a lavish lifestyle. When tragedy strikes and his lifelong manager and friend (Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson) leaves him behind, Hope hits rock bottom and turns to an unlikely saviour at a run-down local gym.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 50% Audience: 78%

COMEDY

What We Did On Our Holiday

Directors: Andy Hamilton, Guy Jenkin
Starring: Rosamund Pike, David Tennant

Doug and Abi are in the midst of a difficult divorce, and have asked the kids to keep it a secret from their extended family.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 74% Audience: 74%

DRAMA

Mr. Holmes

Director: Bill Condon
Starring: Ian McKellen, Laura Linney

Mr. Holmes is a new twist on the world's most famous detective. In 1947, an aging Sherlock Holmes revisits the circumstances of the unsolved case that forced him into retirement, and searches for answers to the mysteries of life and love — before it's too late.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 87% Audience: 76%

DRAMA

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

Director: Alfonso Gomez-Rejon
Starring: Thomas Mann, Olivia Cooke

This Sundance winner is the story of Greg Gaines, an awkward high school senior whose mom forces him to spend time with a girl in his class who was just diagnosed with cancer.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 80% Audience: 90%

DRAMA, COMEDY

Unexpected

Director: Kris Swanberg, Kris Williams
Starring: Cobie Smulders, Gail Bean,

An inner-city high school teacher discovers she is pregnant at the same time as one of her most promising students and the two develop an unlikely friendship.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 80% Audience: 90%

Parker Posey stars opposite Joaquin Phoenix in Irrational Man. HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two New York stars team up

IRRATIONAL MAN

Parker Posey appears in her first Woody Allen flick

Matt Prigge
Metro in New York City

Parker Posey first became a darling of NYC indie film 20 years ago with Party Girl, and since then she's had a front row seat to how the city and the industry have changed. Now she's starring in her first Woody Allen film, Irrational Man, and while it might seem surprising she hasn't teamed up with him until now, she says it was worth the wait.

When you get called for a Woody Allen movie, that's got to be a pretty special moment.
Yeah, it's as if he's created a language for actors. He's an inspiration to filmmakers and actors who are comedic and dramatic at the same time. He writes characters that hold a lot of dynamic qualities, and no one understands women and writes women like he does. Some of these lines that I got to say I was very excited about.

How was actually working with him?
It's amazing. I got the pages, and the writing was so loose and natural. It was funny to me — not that there were jokes in there. There were a few little quips. He also said, "No smiling. You won't be smiling." And then of course I'd be like, "OK!" Sure thing, you know? He's just such a talent. It's so great. It wasn't easy, but it shouldn't be easy.

The trailer for this film is very careful about what actually happens in it.
I know, it's great. What about that music? That music that takes you out of the seriousness of what this man is doing, what he's done. This a really dark story, and it's very unsettling. I was breathless after I saw it. I love that it takes place now and that he is portraying it in a world of college. It's great because here he is at all of 80 giving the conversation to moviegoers about philosophy and meaning.

I'm terrified by the fact that Party Girl was 20 years ago.
I know, because there's a decade that kind of was missing. It's kind of a heavy thing, but I think 9/11 did a number, really did something to all of us as far as mourning, what it did to the entertainment industry.

It changed movies, too. I thought there would be more comedies, and there have been comedies but there's violence in these comedies. There are not a lot of romantic comedies or Nora Ephron-type comedies — grown-up comedies. I miss those. I looked at those movies, wanting to be in them.

GAG REEL

Parker's L.A. experiment
An inveterate New Yorker, Parker Posey finds her visits to the West Coast a bit odd, so she tries to have some fun with them.

"A few years ago, I would drive around in the passenger seat of my friend's car, and I thought it was funny to just roll down the window and shout at people," recalls Posey. "No one in L.A. talks to each other on the street because they don't really like each other that much. They're really trepidatious about each other and a little shy and fearful. So I thought it would be funny."

MATT PRIGGE/METRO NEW YORK

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The Look of Silence tells the story of survivors of 1960's Indonesian death squads. HANDOUT

Oppenheimer breaks silence

DOCUMENTARY

Survivors speak in The Act of Killing followup

Steve Gow
For Metro

Joshua Oppenheimer's Oscar-nominated first-hand telling of the atrocities of 1960s Indonesian death squads in The Act of Killing has been called one of the best documentaries ever made. Now, the filmmaker is spotlighting the survivors of such gruesome violence in The Look of Silence where he follows one family still living amongst their son's own executioners.

Metro caught up with Oppenheimer to find out what half a century of silence does to a society.

Is it important to acknowledge this isn't a sequel but a companion film to The Act of Killing?
I think the two films form a single work that's greater than the sum of the parts — or at least I hope so ... the films address two fundamentally complementary aspects of — not necessarily what happened in 1965 because these films are not historical documentaries — but of the impunity today.

You've described making a film about survivors of genocide like walking into a minefield of clichés. How so?
I feel that most of the way that survivors are often used and, in a sense, abused by cinema is to reassure viewers that we're good and have little to do with the perpetrators.

By holding up saintly survivors in contrast with villainous perpetrators, we are reassured that somehow we have nothing to do with the perpetrators (and) I was very conscious that that does an injustice to the complexity of the survivors' experience.

Can Western audiences relate to such oppressive societies?
I would caution anybody from thinking this is a window to some far-off, non-Western world that you knew little about ahead of time. I think these films have been impactful outside Indonesia (because) they hopefully work as mirrors in which we see ourselves and in which we see impunity in our own societies.

> **They helped me overcome that most crippling of fears, which is the fear of looking.**
> Director Josh Oppenheimer, on his documentaries

How have these two films affected your approach to future projects — I'm sure you're not in a rush to get back to Indonesia.
I can't safely return to Indonesia. I could probably get in again but I don't think I'd get out alive. But the two films really made me the filmmaker I am today. They helped me overcome that most crippling of fears, which is the fear of looking.

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MILES DAVIS BIO PIC

Cheadle's Miles Ahead set to close NY film fest

Miles Ahead, a long-gestating passion project for actor Don Cheadle, is to get its world premiere at the closing night of the New York Film Festival in October.

Marking Cheadle's directorial debut and also starring him as the late jazz trumpeter, the film was financed through a crowdfunding effort and is said to focus on Davis in the late 1970s.

"Holed up in his Manhattan apartment, wracked with pain from a variety of ailments and fiending for the next cheque from his record company, dodging sycophants and industry executives, he is haunted by memories of old glories and humiliations and of his years with his great love Frances Taylor (Emayatzy Corinealdi)," reads a description provided by the film festival. AFP

Don Cheadle. ROBYN BECK/AFP

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WOOD AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

Cobie Smulders delivers

INTERVIEW

HIMYM actor stars in new film about an unplanned pregnancy

Matt Prigge
Metro in New York City

Since her nine-year stint on How I Met Your Mother ended, actress Cobie Smulders has divvied her time between Marvel business — she's played S.H.I.E.L.D. biggie Maria Hill in four projects so far — and indies.

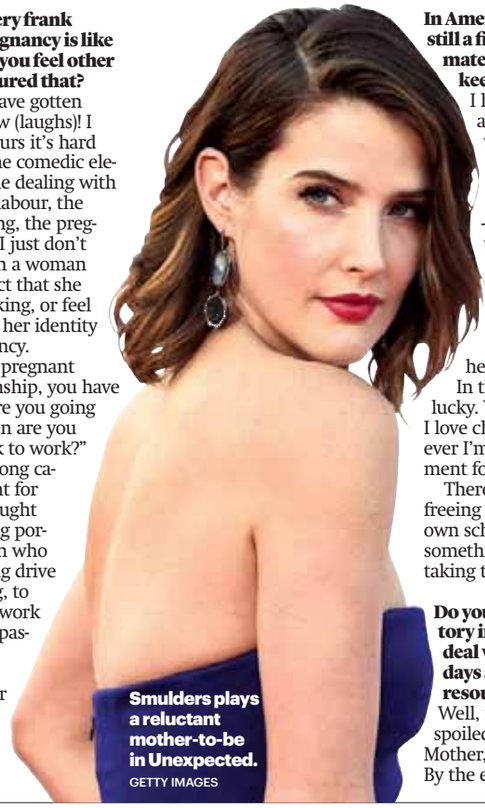
Earlier this season she cussed up a storm in Andrew Bujalski's fitness-centred Results. In Unexpected she's only slightly less grouchy as a young teacher who accidentally gets knocked up. Her crankiness over her changing body, coupled with the anxiety over trying to keep her career going, dovetails with her friendship with a low-income student (Gail Bean) who's also expecting.

Metro catches up with Smulders to talk about Canada and portrayals of pregnancy in film.

This movie is very frank about what pregnancy is like for women. Do you feel other films have captured that?

None of them have gotten it right until now (laughs)! I mean, even in ours it's hard not to rely on the comedic elements of a movie dealing with pregnancy: the labour, the Lamaze breathing, the pregnancy cravings. I just don't think we've seen a woman deal with the fact that she has to stop working, or feel like she's losing her identity through pregnancy.

When you're pregnant and in a relationship, you have to ask, "What are you going to do?" or "When are you going to go back to work?" if you have a strong career. It's different for everybody. I thought it was interesting portraying a woman who has such a strong drive to keep working, to be a part of the work force, to have a passion other than her family — to try and wrap her head around it while going through so many changes.



Smulders plays a reluctant mother-to-be in Unexpected.
GETTY IMAGES

In America, at least, there's still a fight to get more maternal leave, or at least keep it at what it is.

I hope we can get to a place in our society where every job and every workforce is understanding towards having a family — that a woman has to take a break and that a man does, too.

Growing up in Canada we have paternity leave, which is amazing, as well as a healthy maternity leave. In this industry I've been lucky. You are self-employed. I love checking that box whenever I'm filling out a government form.

There's something very freeing about being on your own schedule, but there's also something terrifying about taking time off.

Do you feel your long history in TV has helped you deal with indies, their long days and limited resources?

Well, no. I feel I was very spoiled with How I Met Your Mother, because it's a sitcom. By the end of it, we were only working a couple of days a week. We were such a well-oiled machine at that point that we'd bang out 20 to 30 pages of script a day like it was nothing.

I'm very good at memorizing lines now. Now in films you're at the mercy of locations and times and all that. But it makes things interesting.

Kris Swanberg comes from a very collaborative filmmaking background. Could you sense that you were involved in the process?

She was very open with me, probably because I related to what Samantha was going through, being a mother myself, and being a working mom at that. I was able to have a lot of input in the script. She'd even add scenes for me.

I was really adamant about — I wouldn't say adamant. The Canadian version of being adamant is saying, "Hey, I had an idea, don't worry about it, I know you've scouted everything and it will be a pain in the ass, but I had this idea ... if it's OK, if it's not too much trouble."

That's me being adamant.

BACKGROUND

Hollywood's blockbuster pregnancy pictures

Knocked Up (2007)
Seth Rogen plays a stoner who reluctantly does the right thing after impregnating a one-night stand.

Nine Months (1995)
After his girlfriend gets pregnant, the life of child-psychologist Hugh Grant slips into sheer disarray.

Baby Mama (2008)
Uptight, career-minded Tina Fey hires slouch Amy Poehler to be her surrogate.

The Back-Up Plan (2010)
Jennifer Lopez meets the man of her dreams immediately after being artificially inseminated with twins.

Junior (1994)
The inconceivable happens when Arnold Schwarzenegger agrees to carry a baby to term after a wacky fertility experiment.
STEVE GOW/FOR METRO

HOLLYWOOD

Unexpected, a film showing pregnancy from a woman's POV

Steve Gow
For Metro

Kris Swanberg hadn't recognized it until she'd already begun but the filmmaker made one of the only movies in history to explore pregnancy from the female point-of-view.

"I was looking at other movies just for reference (and) it occurred to me none of them were from the female perspective," said Swanberg recently, citing such male-directed childbirth classics as Knocked Up and Nine Months. "All of them are from the male perspective."

Based on Swanberg's own experiences, the Chicago director set out to present pregnancy from the mother's outlook — two of them, in fact. Starring Vancouver-bred actress Cobie Smulders, Unexpected tells the tale of a high-school teacher whose surprise pregnancy finds her bonding with a student, also expecting.

"The movie's very fictionalized; we weren't doing yoga together or anything," said Swanberg of her former student who inspired the story. "But that basic relationship is the model for the one in the film. I just thought it's so rare for someone to have a close, intimate relationship with a person outside their social class (and) going through something like pregnancy at the same time."

A tender comedy that has been praised for its authenticity, the plot plays down Hollywood's affinity for melodramatic morning sickness and frenzied fathers. Instead, Unexpected aims to explore the emotional turmoil of modern-day motherhood.

"I did have notes on the script to up the drama but to me it felt like plenty of conflict," admitted Swanberg.

"A lot of drama in the movie is internal but that's what I was going through when I was pregnant. People aren't going through car crashes and crazy stuff — people are going through what's in their heads, and I wanted to tell that story."

That's also what makes the female-perspective an important distinction. Only women can truly capture the spiritual anxiety that comes with childbirth. Well, women and possibly revered '80s filmmaker John Hughes, whose oeuvre includes the hidden-gem She's Having a Baby.

"It's told from the male perspective, (but) he was able to make these mainstream films and ground them on an emotional level," laughed Swanberg of Hughes's overlooked classic.

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Pop star's buzz grows

NEW ARTIST

Tori Kelly's live performances drawing new fans, success

While music awards shows have dwindled in ratings throughout the years, for Tori Kelly, they have been a gold mine.

Thanks to her huge voice, the singer with diva hair marked a breakthrough following captivating performances at this year's Billboard Music Awards and last month's BET Awards. Kelly's acoustic performance at the Billboard Awards in May even caught the attention of BET executive Stephen Hill, who was sitting next to Kelly's manager, Scooter Braun.

Hill requested Kelly be a part of the Smokey Robinson tribute for the BET Awards, where she sang a rousing version of Who's Lovin' You and gained new fans.

"This is the debut I was hoping for," said Braun, who also manages Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande. "They are hearing her sing once and they are buying the entire album because they want a lot of her."

Kelly's debut album, Unbreakable Smile, landed at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 albums chart last month.

"I am just throwing myself out there and people are just into it. It's really cool to be able to do what I love," she said.

Listing Jill Scott, Lauryn Hill and gospel singer Crystal Lewis as inspirations, the 22-year-old spent years getting to this moment: She won America's Most Talented Kids at 11, performed on Star Search and auditioned for American Idol.

Kelly said since she was successful on YouTube, put out her own EP and was organizing her own tour, she was not looking for help. But she says she took a chance with Braun because he was not interested in tainting her artistry.

"(He said), 'I just want to take what you are doing and make it grow and expand it,'" Kelly recalled.

Unbreakable Smile is executive-produced by Max Martin, the hitmaker who has crafted pop anthems for Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys. Kelly said she was initially reluctant to work with Martin because she feared her creative input would not be appreciated.

She admits she was wrong.

"He is very one with the artist and right away he sat me down and he was like, 'I just want to make the songs that you want to make,'" she said.

Kelly said a lot of her music comes from her own experiences. Braun said she wrote the album's title track, about not succumbing to the pressures of the industry, after he used tough love to compel her to create the gritty song.

"You are boring. People think you are boring," Braun said, recounting his talk with Kelly. "I don't understand why you are not showing who you really are ... you are so guarded in your music."

Kelly said she hopes her raw lyrics and passion connects with fans, and that her friends, family and faith will shield her from losing herself to fame.

"There are not a lot of 'yes' people around me, which I really like," she said. "I want people to just be honest around me and just treat me like regular Tori." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

American singer-songwriter Tori Kelly's album, Unbreakable Smile, debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 albums chart last month. AP/FILE PHOTO

IN BRIEF

Inking the record deal

Steve Barnett, the chairman and CEO of Capitol Music Group, said Kelly's commitment to her craft and her values made the decision to sign her easy.

"She is completely authentic and from the outset she had a very clear vision of what she wanted to be, and what she wanted to stand for, and the kind of music that she wanted to make," Barnett said.

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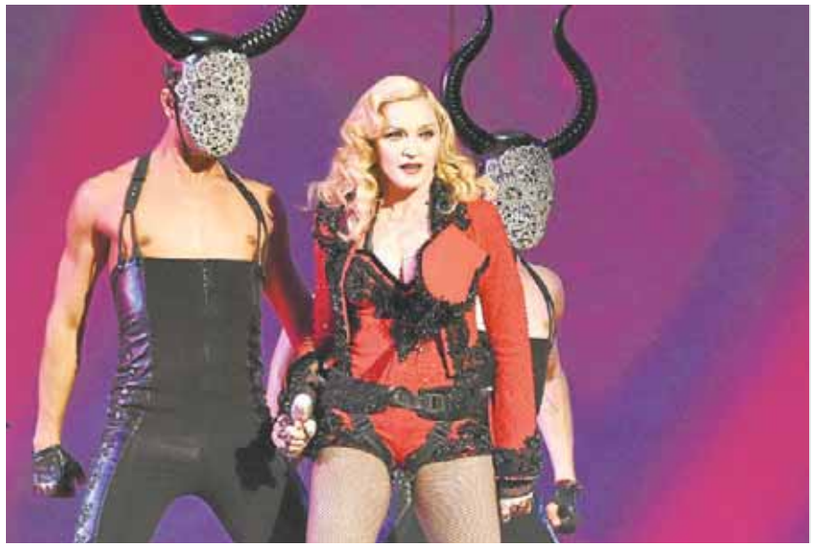

Madonna will launch her Rebel Heart Tour this fall, which includes more than 60 shows across North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. AP/FILE PHOTO

Madonna thinks artists deep into their careers should stop if they don't have anything more to say. But at 56, the singer says she still has things to talk about, and in short, she feels like Pablo Picasso.

"I like to compare myself to other kinds of artists like Picasso. He kept painting and painting until the day he died. Why? Because I guess he felt inspired to do so," she said. "Life inspired him, so he had to keep expressing himself, and that's how I feel."

Madonna released her self-titled debut album in 1983, and her latest album, Rebel Heart, earlier this year. She said the key to sticking around is her continual desire to inspire others.

"I don't think there's a time, a date, an expiration date for being creative," she said. "I think you go until you don't have any more to say."

The pop icon will launch her Rebel Heart Tour on Sept. 9 in Montreal. The tour includes more than 60 shows across North America, Europe, Australia and Asia.

"The theme I really truly explore in this show more than anything is love and romance," she said in a phone interview from her home in New York City last week. "I want people to walk out like they're feeling inspired and like they've seen something they've never seen before (and) felt something they've never felt before."

Comedian Amy Schumer, whose new movie Trainwreck opened impressively at No. 2 with $30.2 million last weekend, will open for three Madonna shows in New York.

> **I don't think there's a time, a date, an expiration date for being creative. I think you go until you don't have any more to say.**
> Madonna

"She's a role model for women, and I am too, and I think it's a good match," said Madonna, who added that the idea to bring Schumer on board came from the singer's management team.

"I love her and ... I just thought, 'That's interesting.' (I'll) try something new and different rather than the usual run-of-the-mill — have a band, have a DJ. It's definitely a new thing. I hope it works — fingers crossed."

Madonna says picking the set list for her upcoming tour has been hard, mainly because she wants to sing her newest songs but also satisfy her longtime, die-hard fans.

"I realize I have 32 years of other songs, so I have to pick and choose. I sit there for weeks and weeks and weeks trying to figure out which of my old catalogue I want to do," she said.

"It's a puzzle that we have to put together 'cause thematically the songs — the old and the new — they have to go together; sonically they have to go together."

She's even picky about the costumes onstage. "What people wear, from their footwear to the buttons on their jacket, is all very important to me," she said.

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Omi skyrockets to top of Billboard

CHART-TOPPER

Artist calls success of hit Cheerleader 'monumental'

Jamaican singer Omi may seem like an overnight success, but his chart-topping summer hit, Cheerleader, has been years in the making.

He started working on the reggae-pop song seven years ago. He released the track in 2012 under the Jamaican label, Oufah, but a 2014 remix of the song by German DJ Felix Jaehn helped give the tune new flavour — and new life.

The upbeat ode to a supportive girlfriend is spending its second week at No. 1 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart.

"It wasn't supposed to be a song," Omi said in an interview Tuesday. "It was supposed to be like an interlude on the album."

Cheerleader has sold 1.4 million tracks and has 108.9 million on-demand streams, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Monumental is the word I can think of right now," he said. "For an artist who is from a little island in the Caribbean, it means a lot. It's a very proud moment."

The 28-year-old, born Omar Samuel Pasley, is adjusting to his newfound fame in the U.S., recently holding up airport security lines as TSA agents clamoured to take photos with him.

"Fan reactions are crazy sometimes. You know, like, 'Omi, I love you! Omi, my lover!'" he mused.

Not to be derailed, he's staying focused on his next single, due out in August, and first album, slated for the fall on Columbia Records.

"Fame is a distraction sometimes. You know, it's a distraction if you let it. So it's very important to stay focused, stay very connected to your roots," he said.

The self-proclaimed "country boy" from the rural Jamaican parish of Clarendon credits his small-town upbringing for keeping him grounded as his career skyrockets.

"We've seen many heroes from Jamaica, you know, and to be put in that class or to be looked upon on that level is overwhelming," he said. "It's pretty big shoes to fill, you know. I'm a size eight, but I'll try my best." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BACKGROUND

The power of the remix

Initially starting out as just two verses and a chorus, Omi's Cheerleader was given a bit of a makeover by 20-year-old DJ Felix Jaehn through imbuing acoustic gestures — including conga, piano and trumpet — to embellish the original song's simplistic feel.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OMI's upbeat, chart-topping ode to a supportive girlfriend recently rallied to No. 1 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart following huge success abroad. AP/HANDOUT

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17-year-old Silento's new song, Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae) boasts 150 million on-demand streams. The track has also peaked at No. 3 on Billboard's Hot 100 songs chart. AP/FILE PHOTO

SILENTO

Breakthrough rapper dawns new dance craze

Silento, the 17-year-old rapper who's having a pop culture moment with the dance craze to his debut song, says he wants to be a role model to the young kids who have posted videos dancing to his tune.

His Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae) has continued to rise on the charts and gain millions of views on YouTube, becoming popular among children who have imitated the dances he references in the song, including Nae Nae and the Stanky Legg.

"I always wanted to be a role model," said Silento, born Ricky Hawke, in a recent interview. "I always (wanted) to be the one everybody look at and copy off of."

Silento's song has sold 892,168 tracks and boasts 150 million on-demand streams, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It has peaked at No. 3 on Billboard's Hot 100 songs chart and No. 2 on the R&B/Hip-Hop songs and Rap songs charts, respectively.

Fans — old and young — have posted videos dancing to the popular song. NBA player Stephen Curry and his wife posted a video last week of their daughter, Riley, dancing to the song as she celebrated her third birthday.

"I was just like, 'Wow! Wow!' That's all you can say," Silento said of the song's success. "I just be smiling. It looks like me when I was little. I used to do the same thing."

> **I always wanted to be a role model**
> Up-and-coming artist Silento

The performer, a senior in high school in Atlanta, said he came up with the idea for Watch Me at school. After recording the song, he uploaded it to SoundCloud in January and posted videos on Instagram of people dancing to the track. Capitol Music Group caught wind of the rising hit.

"They came like that second week. I got an email saying, 'I've seen your song last week and I see it this week and it exploded,'" recalled Silento, who signed with the record label. "I was like, 'Yeah, that's that message I was looking for.'"

He said that instead of releasing an EP or album, "first we're going to push out more singles," adding his next single is "going to be a record for the ladies."

Silento, who grew up admiring Usher, Chris Brown, Mariah Carey, Ciara and Mary J. Blige, said his sound is a mix of rapping and singing.

"I might throw another dance song in there. I got a couple up my sleeve, but right now I'm not trying to keep people too focused on me as a dancer, I'm trying to show them myself as an artist," he said.

And what does his stage name mean?

"I used to always tell people what I wanted to do and how I wanted to do it, so it's less talk and more action."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FAN FICTION

Franco co-writes Lana story

Actor, author and jack-of-all-trades James Franco has co-written a book about singer Lana Dey Rey that will be released in March 2016.

Franco wrote Flip-Side: Real and Imaginary Conversations With Lana Del Rey along with David Shields.

He previously directed a film adaptation of Shields' book I Think You're Totally Wrong: A Quarrel, which was co-written with Caleb Powell.

Flip-Side, which Penguin Random House is to publish on March 15, builds on a piece Franco wrote about Lana Del Rey, his muse and friend, in V Magazine.

Little is known about the book for now, although details from the publisher indicate it will be a 100-page paperback.

AFP

James Franco's new book releases March 15, 2016. GETTY IMAGES

On The Brink of Season 2

COMEDY

Jack Black political satire builds momentum, audience

Jack Black plays a low-level American diplomat stationed in Islamabad on the HBO series The Brink. HANDOUT

The Jack Black and Tim Robbins comedy The Brink, which takes a satirical look at U.S. foreign affairs, is up for a second season, after Sunday's episode won greater audience favour.

Black plays a low-ranking diplomatic officer stationed in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad; Robbins the U.S. Embassy network's ultimate authority as the incumbent secretary of state.

They're joined by Pablo Schreiber of Orange Is the New Black, a pilot in the U.S. Navy who has a nifty sideline as his aircraft carrier's drug dealer in residence.

But the unscrupulous trio find that they're in the same boat, so to speak, when the threat of nuclear war looms and their fates become entangled whether they like it or not.

With six episodes out in the wild, the HBO series' audience seems to be stabilizing at around 1 million U.S. viewers.

Backed by super-producer Jerry Weintraub, who passed away on July 6, the series was created by Roberto Benabib, a writer and executive producer on Weeds, alongside his novelist brother Kim.

Early critical response to The Brink was lukewarm, but it still has significant star power thanks to canny casting, and a slow start in setting the scene has given way to a tighter middle for Season 1.

In terms of network programming, it fills the power vacuum left by Emmy winner Veep, created by political satirist Armando Iannucci — though that too has a new season ordered by HBO — and for its 'live' U.S. audience, The Brink airs directly after the second season episodes of wildly popular series True Detective.

Just like True Detective, fans of The Brink can expect a shakeup to the second season's wider setting after the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad sorts itself out, though without the wholesale changes to its cast roster that the former is now known for.

Other U.S. TV series also benefiting from recent renewals include ABC Family's sci-fi crime drama Stitchers, with Emma Ishta making her breakthrough in the lead role, SundanceTV's Peabody Award-winning Rectify, and AMC's recreation of revolutionary war subterfuge in Turn. AFP

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She's Cait: Jenner premieres new show

CELEB REALITY TV

Despite reality trappings, new docuseries has higher purpose

It's the next step in the biggest celebrity story of the year.

It's the long-awaited debut of Caitlyn Jenner's docuseries charting her new life as a transgender woman.

Fittingly, I Am Cait (premiering Sunday at 8 p.m. EDT on E!) opens with Jenner, her ample tresses in huge rollers, at home getting hair-and-makeup treatment as she beholds a giant blowup of her bombshell Vanity Fair cover that followed her April interview with Diane Sawyer.

Yes, Jenner's transition from Bruce to Caitlyn has been a highly orchestrated spectacle, with I Am Cait the latest phase of the campaign. And, typical of celeb reality shows, there isn't a scene in this first of eight episodes that doesn't seem stage-managed to push the starry uber-narrative along.

Even so, there is something more substantial going on here. A gratifying measure of authenticity manages to bypass the celebrity trappings.

Jenner's mother and two sisters help. Delivered to Jenner's seaside California compound for their first encounter with her as a woman, they seem refreshingly like regular folks who are genuinely focused on a family member they love and support, never mind all the lights and cameras there to capture every moment.

"It's going to be so difficult for me to think of you as 'she,' and say 'Caitlyn' when I want to speak with you," her mother says. "It's going to take some getting used to, but I want to do what you want."

At the other end of the authenticity scale are stepdaughter Kim Kardashian and her husband, Kanye West. They are seen in a cameo appearance that plays as unintended comic relief, with Kardashian never doffing her floor-length coat (she blames her modesty on her pregnancy, yet it smacks more of, "I don't show my body except for my own projects") and with West explaining that his shoelaces are untied because they're unnecessary since his shoes are really slippers ("the laces are sort of after the fact").

Kardashian takes the time to survey Jenner's closet full of new women's fashions. Then she and West make their hasty exit.

Such interludes undercut the dignity of Jenner's challenges, and make what she is going through arguably less relatable to an audience that needs to relate.

On the other hand, fame claims attention, and the celebrity machine for Caitlyn Jenner, including I Am Cait, has been impossible to miss. With Cait, she will have a weekly pulpit and a guaranteed flock to whom she knows how to deliver her message loud and clear.

"The tremendous amount of support that I've gotten has been overwhelming, but you also have to realize that it's not this way for everybody," she takes pains to point out.

More than once, she cites the lack of support from family, friends and outsiders experienced by far too many in the trans community, as well as the high murder rate and many suicides. Jenner says she relates:

"I've had some very dark moments in my life. I have been in my house with a gun and said, 'Let's just end it right here.'"

"People are dying over this issue," she says. "I feel a tremendous responsibility here, because I have a voice, and there are so many trans people out there who do not have a voice."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Caitlyn Jenner accepts the Arthur Ashe award for courage at the ESPY Awards in Los Angeles. Jenner's docuseries, I Am Cait, premieres Sunday at 8 p.m. EDT on E! AP/HANDOUT

> **"I've had some very dark moments in my life. I have been in my house with a gun and said, 'Let's just end it right here.'**
>
> Caitlyn Jenner

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HS	1.9%	2.9%	3.9%	4.9%	1.9%	2.9%	3.9%	4.9%
GS	1.9%	2.9%	3.9%	4.9%	1.9%	2.9%	3.9%	4.9%
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4 MOVIE STARS WE'D LIKE TO SEE MAKE A COMEBACK ON TV

The stampede of film stars to TV is no longer just a trend — it's reality. And we've moved on from the Kevin Spaceys to stars in need of a break. For instance, this fall sees Wesley Snipes head to TV for The Player, after a long stretch away from film. We think there are plenty of other film actors ripe for a TV resurgence. Here are our picks and where they'd thrive. LISA WEIDENFELD/METRO IN NEW YORK

1 Jackie Chan: appearing in a family comedy

Though Chan has Rush Hour 3 on the horizon, he seems to be past his action star heyday. That's OK, though — that just means it's time for him to focus on his equally great but less honoured talent as a comic actor.

Chan is great at physical comedy and we can easily picture him as a beleaguered father to hipster kids, getting in generational clashes about how easy they have it.

2 Karen Allen: appearing in a tense legal drama

Allen had a stretch in the '80s where she dominated, but lately (except for that return in the most recent Indiana Jones movie) she's been less active. Which means it's the perfect time for her to play some kind of high-powered attorney.

We're imagining a Good Wife and How to Get Away with Murder hybrid. She's brilliant, but morally compromised (you know, like every other TV lawyer). Bonus points if they can talk Harrison Ford into a cameo.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

3 Winona Ryder: appearing in a showbiz satire

Ryder was the It Girl of the '90s, but a series of lacklustre roles and that little shoplifting issue, plus the usual "industry doesn't know what to do with women over 35" nonsense have kept her low profile. Why not spoof that?

Sure, half the cast of Friends is doing it (The Comeback and Extras), but we think there's room for a sharp look at the life of a former It Girl, particularly during this golden era for female comics on television. Sure, she's appearing in an upcoming HBO miniseries (Show Me a Hero), but we think she's ready for her own show.

4 Jon Lovitz: appearing in a seedy lawyer comedy

Sure, Lovitz was also a TV star, but who can forget his turn in A League of Their Own?

Wherever he's been, we'd like him back, along with that particular style of scumbag he portrays so well. Casting would be almost too easy. He could play a seedy lawyer à la Better Call Saul, but, you know, more funny, less violent. We're also willing to accept him as a doctor with terrible people skills, in a pinch.

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Tee time in the Bow Valley

ALBERTA

Nature on full display for golfers in Canmore

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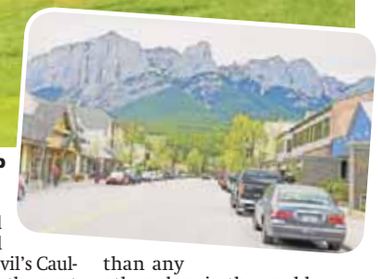

The ninth hole on Silvertip Golf Course. The course features glacial ponds and forest-lined freeways, as well as cliff-top tee shots. At right, the view from Canmore's Main Street, with the Rocky Mountains in the background. ISTOCK

For years Canmore was one of the best kept secrets in the Rocky Mountains: a town with the same spectacular scenery as nearby Banff, but hipper, friendlier and more affordable.

Located just outside the gates of Banff National Park, 104 kilometres west of Calgary, Canmore is an ideal home base for a mountain golf holiday. But also budget time between rounds for hiking, kayaking, rafting and the other summer activities that annually help draw more than a million overnight visitors to the rapidly growing community of 13,000.

Two of Canada's most dramatically scenic golf courses have been carved through the Bow Valley corridor minutes from Canmore's lively downtown.

At Stewart Creek Golf and Country Club, golfers are treated to a thrill ride of elevation changes on a Gary Browning-designed layout set in the shadow of the Three Sisters, an awe-inspiring three-peak massif.

Silvertip Golf Course, on the opposite side of the corridor, is just as thrilling. Glacial ponds and forest-lined fairways define a design by Canmore-based architect Les Furber that includes several cliff-top tee shots.

And right in town is Canmore Golf and Curling Club. This older, classically designed layout offers many of the same mountain golf experiences found at higher-profile Stewart Creek and Silvertip — mountain vistas, forests of towering fir trees, a meandering glacial river — at about half the cost.

But the biggest draw for golfers is the Banff Springs Golf Course, just inside the park's gates in the alpine town world-renowned for both its beauty and the iconic Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel.

In the valley below the 764-room Castle in the Mountains, legendary Canadian architect Stanley Thompson built the first course anywhere to cost more than $1 million. Opened in 1929, the Banff Springs has long been included in virtually every ranking of the game's leading layouts, and its most celebrated hole, the par-three Devil's Cauldron, numbers among the most photographed in golf.

Visitors often make the mistake of neglecting Canmore in favour of glitzier Banff. But Canmore is equally beguiling in its own unpretentious way. Pubs, coffee shops, boutiques and art galleries line the streets of a town that is said to be home to more Olympic athletes than any other place in the world.

Towering over the community are the magnificent peaks of the Rundle Mountain Range. The fast-rushing Bow River snakes through Canmore's heart, while a network of wildlife corridors and trails spreads out in every direction.

It's a setting perhaps unsurpassed in the West.

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Road blocks and pit stops

REALITY TV

What it's like to be a contestant on The Amazing Race

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie

I am a super-fan of the Amazing Race, TV's reality show meets frenetic travelogue. Needless to say, when producers of the Amazing Race Canada asked me to run a leg of the race to celebrate the start of Season 3, I was thrilled.

As one half of Team Canada AM along with on-air weather presenter Lyndsay Morrison, I quickly realized how much harder it is to be a contestant than a critical armchair competitor.

After running almost four hours I can say that what you see on TV, although edited, is real. It's what you don't see that makes you more sympathetic towards racers who seemingly underperform.

Loren Christie and Lyndsay Morrison, in the dark grey shirts, represented for Team Canada AM in the Amazing Race Canada media challenge. Activities on a hot Toronto summer day included a little Frisbee in the park. ALL PHOTOS MARK O'NEILL

An inauspicious start

Each team races with a producer and cameraman in tow, whom you must keep within 20 feet of you at all times. On our 35-degree race day it was a struggle for our crew, lugging 60 pounds of camera equipment, to sprint around Toronto in search of cabs.

Racers are not allowed to carry any handheld devices to aid in directions, so you are reliant on the knowledge of strangers.

The first clue directed us to Stanley Park.

Neither of us had heard of a Stanley Park in Toronto, but thankfully a well-meaning stranger caught up in our excitement had.

Of course we never bothered to verify his directions, which turned out to be wrong.

We ended up being the seventh team out of nine to arrive at the first challenge.

Change of luck

Only one of us could do the Road Block. The only guideline the clue gave was to ask, "Who is more patriotic?"

For no real reason, we chose Lyndsay to represent. The challenge was to sing O Canada in English and French by memory. Bilingual songstress Lyndsay, unlike members of the other teams, hit it out of the park and we were off on our next task. Thank goodness — if it had been me, we would still be there.

Between doing puzzles and knocking solo cups off of sticks with Frisbees, we quickly lost track of where we stood in the race. The fear of being last results in a continuous rush of adrenalin.

Driving to the Hard Rock Cafe in Dundas Square, the Pit Stop for our leg of the race, we saw another team sprinting ahead of us. Lyndsay and I jumped out of our cab, they went right — we went left.

We choose correctly and when host Jon Montgomery announced we were team … number … 2, I felt like I had won the lottery.

TRAVEL NOTES COMFY SEATS, HIGHER VIEWS, ISLAND TREATS

Seat upgrade

Thanks to staggered seating, the new Cozy Suite by Thompson Aero Seating gives everybody in Economy a bit more elbow room, especially if you're saddled with the middle seat. The design offers better aisle access and side headrests for no-nod napping. Airlines can actually fit more passengers in the cabin. Everybody wins.

Bucket list

The one-of-a-kind-experience people at If Only are offering one truly expensive hot-air balloon ride: over Mount Everest for $2.6 million per person with famed pilot Chris Dewhirst. The flight itself takes one day, but the expedition may take several weeks in Nepal, while you train and wait for the weather window. Visit IfOnly.com.

Foodie favourite

The Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival is back for its sixth year, running Nov. 19 to 22. Now is the time to plan a weekend in what's known as the culinary capital of the Caribbean — and the birthplace of rum. Bajan and international chefs will ply audiences with delicious demos. Visit FoodWineRum.com.

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The Giants' Madison Bumgarner had the top-selling jersey during the first half of 2015

Reaching a new golden high

PAN AM 2015

Canada breaks its previous record of 64 gold medals

Damian Warner set a Canadian record in the decathlon on Thursday, while Canada set a national record for gold medals won at the Pan American Games.

The 25-year-old Warner from London, Ont., won the decathlon in the 13th day of competition, in the process breaking Michael Smith's 19-year-old Canadian record.

Warner scored 8,659 points. Smith's mark was 8,626.

He needed to run four minutes 29 seconds in the decathlon's final event, the 1,500 metres, to break the record, and ran 4:24.73.

Warner took a healthy lead into the 1,500 after recording personal bests in the 100 metres, long jump and discus in the two-day event.

Earlier, water-skier Whitney McClintock took first place in the women's slalom event — her second top finish of these Games — to give Canada 65 gold medals in total up to that point. The previous record of 64 was set in Winnipeg in 1999.

"This is great, I'm a happy girl," McClintock said. "I've got the two (medals) I came for already. The rest are a bonus."

McClintock, who won gold Wednesday in the overall competition, finished first in the six-skier slalom field to kick off a six-medal Thursday for Canadian water-skiers. Ryan Dodd capped the effort with a gold medal in the men's jump competition on a warm, sunny afternoon on the waterfront.

Damian Warner celebrates with fans after winning the decathlon on Thursday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

McClintock, from Cambridge, Ont., later added silver medals in the tricks and jump finals and her brother Jason won silver in the men's slalom.

"Unfortunately I wasn't able to get as warm as I needed to and I just kind of stuck," Jason McClintock said.

In the men's tricks, Jaret Llewellyn of Innisfail, Alta., won silver with 10,550 points. American Adam Pickos won gold with 11,110.

Later in the day, Canada earned the gold medal in the team equestrian competition.

4

Whitney McClintock won a total of four medals — two gold, two silver

The Canadians finished the two-round competition with seven faults, one less than Argentina. The U.S. earned the bronze with 12 faults.

The Canadian team consisted of Tiffany Foster of North Vancouver, B.C., 2008 Olympic champion Eric Lamaze of Schomberg, Ont., Yann Candele of Caledon, Ont., and Ian Millar of Perth, Ont., who's making his 10th consecutive Pan Am appearance.

Also, the Canadian men's sabre team won a fencing silver medal after dropping a 45-37 decision to the United States in the final.

Shaul Gordon from Richmond, B.C., Toronto's Mark Peros and Montreal's Joseph Polossifakis made up the Canadian squad, which edged Venezuela to reach the gold-medal match.

Lanni Marchant, the Canadian record-holder in the marathon, raced to a bronze medal in the women's 10,000 metres, crossing in 32 minutes 46.03 seconds.

Andre De Grasse, meanwhile, finished third in his 200 semi-final — his fifth run of the Pan Am Games. The 20-year-old from Markham, Ont., crossed in 20.12 seconds, a night after he won the 100-metre title.

In team sports Thursday night, Canada used a balanced attack to defeat Mexico 96-76 and move within one win of a first ever medal in Pan American Games men's basketball play.

Canada (3-0) went into the game having already secured a semifinal berth and knowing it had won Pool B barring a total collapse against the Mexicans (1-2). Argentina's earlier 80-70 win over the Dominican Republic left both teams at 1-2 and unable to catch Canada in the pool.

Canada's men's field hockey team earned a spot at the 2016 Olympics with a 5-4 win over Brazil in Thursday's semifinal.

Canada will now play Argentina in Saturday's gold-medal game. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Whitney McClintock won three medals in water-skiing on Thursday, including Canada's 65th gold medal of the Pan Am Games. MARTA IWANEK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

SEASONED VETERAN

Water-skier Llewellyn still making waves at 45

Jaret Llewellyn will turn 45 next week and he just won two medals in Pan Am Games water-skiing, competing against the best in the world, all of them about half his age or younger.

So what's an elder statesman doing — surviving — in a sport that should be a young person's game?

"I've been lucky," said the native of Innisfail, Alta. "At a young age, when I started, the top athletes didn't take it as serious as they do today, so I grew up like that and that's why I lasted so long ... no one else has lasted as long as I have,"

Llewellyn took silver in the men's tricks competition Thursday, and narrowly missed a bronze after posting the same distance as Chile's Felipe Miranda in men's jumping. On Wednesday, he earned a silver in the men's overall competition.

Llewellyn is a Canadian sports icon, and his impact was felt by competitors.

"He was on the national team before I was born," said Whitney McClintock. "Everyone on our team, everyone competing here for Canada, Jaret's coached them at some point in their lives. He's someone I always look up to."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Jaret Llewellyn THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Leafs talk up new general manager

Brendan Shanahan's new-school Toronto Maple Leafs front office built on his philosophy of differing viewpoints has a new voice, and this one comes with some 30 years of NHL experience.

Shanahan, who's a year into his duties as team president, believes new general manager Lou Lamoriello "will fit in very, very well and be an incredible boost" to what the Leafs are trying to accomplish. Shanahan went looking for experience to join Kyle Dubas, Mark Hunter and Brandon Pridham in management, and no one has more than Lamoriello.

"If I could map out or draw out a description of the kind of person that we wanted, it would be Lou," Shanahan told a news conference Thursday. "I've always thought that there are certain advantages to hiring people on their way up that are looking to prove themselves and have that sort of hunger and energy to make a name for themselves. But I do think that we were lacking in some experience." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bouma stays with Flames

The Calgary Flames signed forward Lance Bouma to a three-year contract on Thursday.

Bouma played 78 games with the Flames last season, scoring 16 goals and adding 18 assists for 34 points.

He has played 199 career NHL games with Calgary scoring 22 goals and adding 31 assists for 53 points.

Bouma was drafted by the Flames in the third round of the 2008 draft. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Reeling Redblacks set for date with the champs

CFL

Ottawa hosts Stampeders after pair of losses to Esks

The Ottawa Redblacks say their focus is entirely on the Calgary Stampeders and not the upcoming bye week.

They would love nothing more than to head into the break on a winning note with a winning record.

The 2-2 Redblacks, who are on a two-game losing streak, know Friday's game against the defending Grey Cup champion Stampeders (3-1) will be a big challenge.

"We haven't even discussed that there's a bye week after," said Redblacks coach Rick Campbell. "Guys are really focused. It's a great opportunity to get a winning record and be 3-2 and that's what we're focused on."

The Redblacks will be in tough against the more experienced Stampeders and will need to improve significantly from their last two performances.

A strong start would be key for Ottawa, something that has eluded them all season. The Redblacks have yet to pick up a point in the opening 15 minutes of a game. The team has managed to march down the field and get into scoring position, but has yet to capitalize on its opportunities.

"We've just got to make sure we're executing at a high level," said receiver Chris Williams. "We give ourselves the best chance at winning if we do that and that will take care of itself.

"We're still plugging away, it's only Week 5 so we know we've got a long way to go, but it's a good challenge for us. It's a good team coming in and we'll have to be ready to play."

If the Redblacks have any hope of winning they will need to find a way to contain Jon Cornish, who many believe is just starting to find his stride. Two weeks ago the Redblacks gave up 46 points to the Edmonton Eskimos and know things could get ugly quickly if quarterback Bo Levi Mitchell is given too much time and opportunity.

"It's a big game," said defensive back Antoine Pruneau. "We've got to bring it and need to focus on our tackle for sure. We've missed too many tackles in the past two games, but this is not our identity. I know we can do better in that department." THE CANADIAN PRESS

WEEK 5 PICK

Stampeders at Redblacks, Friday, 5 p.m.

The defending Grey Cup champions have the league's best record (3-1) and are atop the West Division standings. But two of those wins have come off late field goals by Rene Paredes — a 50-yard boot on the final play to secure a 24-23 decision over Hamilton and last week a 40-yard effort with under three minutes remaining to give Calgary a 26-25 victory over Winnipeg.

After opening the season with two straight victories — matching last season's total — Ottawa dropped a home-and-home series with the Edmonton Eskimos. But after losing a 46-17 decision in Alberta on July 9, the Redblacks were on the wrong end of a 23-12 contest at TD Place last week.

Pick — Calgary

The Redblacks will need to be better than they were in two straight loss to Edmonton if they hope to have any chance against the reigning champion Stampeders on Friday at Lansdowne Park. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

RECIPE Watermelon Cucumber and Goat Cheese Salad

EAT LIGHT AT HOME

Rose Reisman
rosereisman.com
@rosereisman

Watermelon is at its best this time of year. With a sweet, natural flavour, it's like nature's candy! To pick the best tasting melon, the watermelon should feel heavy for its size. Look for the yellow creamy spot on one end, which means it's ripe.

Serves 4

Ready in
Prep time: 15 minutes

Ingredients
- 4 cups diced watermelon
- 1 cup thinly sliced baby cucumber, cut into half moons
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onions
- 1/4 cup chopped mint or basil
- 3 Tbsp toasted chopped cashews
- 1 oz crumbled goat cheese
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

Directions
1. On a serving plate, add watermelon and cucumber. Garnish with onions, mint, cashews and goat cheese.

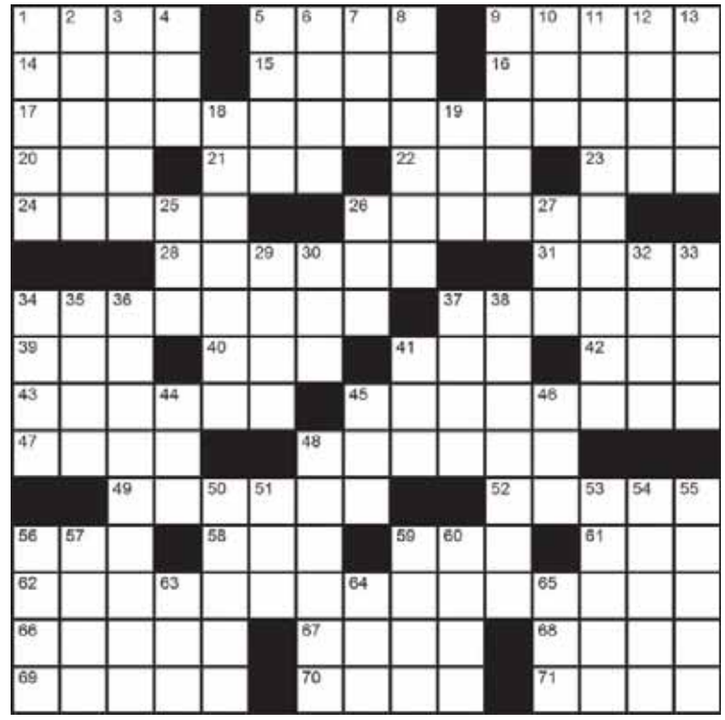
2. In a bowl, mix oil, juice and salt and pepper. Pour over salad and toss gently.

Nutrition per serving
- Calories 180
- Protein 3 g
- Carbohydrates 18 g
- Fibre 2 g
- Total fat 12 g
- Saturated fat 3 g
- Cholesterol 5 mg
- Sodium 85 mg

PHOTO: ROSE REISMAN

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Outperform
5. Serving-of-cereal holder
9. Essential
14. "Barbie Girl" band
15. Merle Haggard's "__ from Muskogee"
16. Spookily strange
17. Vancouver Island: Flowery attraction in Brentwood Bay, a National Historic Site of Canada: 2 wds.
20. Breathed-in stuff
21. Miley Cyrus song: "Party in the _-_-_"
22. '_' __ in Alberta
23. Richard Burton's wife, twice ...her initials-sharers
24. Fights
26. Greece's capital
28. Edmonton CFL player
31. Vintage muscle cars
34. Rock star's date unsurprisingly: 2 wds.
37. Quantity
39. Angelina Jolie title role
40. Irish actor Stephen
41. Monk's title
42. __ periculo (At my own risk, in Latin)
43. Music storage container: 2 letters + wd.
45. Jake Gyllenhaal's new boxer movie
47. Slangy sure
48. Hinder
49. Delicate
52. "No way."
56. Teeth doc's org.
58. Rocky hill
59. Stockholm's country [abbr.]
61. Yoko's surname
62. 1966 hit for partially-Canadian band The Lovin' Spoonful: 4 wds.
66. Manner of speaking
67. Have supper
68. There's none in a power failure, for short
69. Accomplishments
70. Simple
71. Weight allowance

DOWN
1. Rum cakes
2. Rig out
3. Kama __ (Record label the band at #62-Across was on)
4. Tic-Toe link
5. Feathery accessories
6. Pod vegetable
7. Stand-up's asset
8. Smoothly, in music terminology
9. Poetry
10. Roadside mil. hazard
11. Nature's stool in the forest: 2 wds.
12. "It __ Me Babe" by The Turtles
13. Fewer
18. Fancily uniformed cavalrymen of 15th-century Hungary
19. Ooh's pal
25. __ room (Basement)
26. Comic actress Ms. Poehler
27. Stop-_-__
29. Human hinge
30. Apple variety, __ Red
32. Vitamins brand, __ _ Day
33. Pack away
34. 'A' in CIA [abbr.]
35. Amusement park feature
36. Nut variety
37. Sort of lily
38. Daytime theatrical performance
41. Sainte-__ (Quebec City sector)
44. "Bingo!"
45. Pen
46. "__ Haw"
48. Footstep
50. 12 __ or Less (Express checkout sign)
51. __'easter
53. "There you have it!"
54. Enroll
55. Rolls-__ (Posh car)
56. "Like, that'll ever happen.": 2 wds.
57. Guy
59. RR depots
60. Curds and __
63. Clever comment
64. Ms. Vardalos
65. This: French

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
What are your limits? How far can you push yourself? These are the sort of questions you will be asking today and over the weekend. The answers depend entirely on you. Nothing is beyond you if you want it enough.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Resist the urge to criticize today, especially on the domestic front. It would be nice if everyone were as laidback as you but they're not, so make allowances.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You may be free to come and go but you are reluctant to head off into the unknown. Your horizons have been limited for too long. Freedom means nothing unless you have courage.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Take care that, in your attempts to impress someone new, you don't spend more than you can afford. You need to get both your emotional and material priorities right.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
As your confidence returns so does your tendency to take risks and that could be dangerous. Your head may be in the clouds but keep your feet on the ground.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will want to be by yourself over the next few days. Others may find that hard to accept but you must not allow them to persuade you to go places and do things that you would rather avoid.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You will go all out for glory today. There's a good chance you'll upset those who prefer the status quo. You are under no obligation to play down your ambitions just to please them.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Now that the sun is moving through the career area of your chart you will aim higher than before. You will face a lot of challenges but you will never doubt that you have what it takes.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The sun in Leo will encourage you to think in new ways. It won't be long until you realize what you've been missing over the years. A slight shift in awareness will lead to major changes in your philosophy of life.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The time has come to confront your demons. Don't be afraid to probe into areas of your mind that you would normally avoid. Don't be afraid to question your real motives. Don't be afraid to confront your true self.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you try to put one over on partners and colleagues they will see through your tactics and turn them against you. You must be open and honest.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You have only yourself to blame for allowing people to take advantage of you. Look seriously at what you do for other people — then start doing less.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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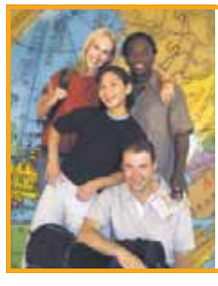

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